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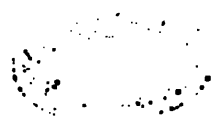


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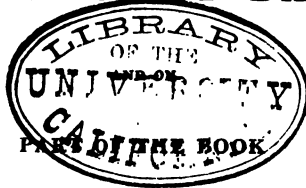
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OBSERVATIONS

ON

THE VISIONS OF DANIEL,



OF THE

Revelation of St. John.

WITH

AN APPENDIX.



BY THE

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RECTOR OF KELLING CUM SALTHOUSE, IN THE COUNTY OF
NORFOLK.



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INTRODUCTION.

WHEN a man has for a considerable time been occupying his mind with a particular subject, and has brought that subject to some determination, he is apt to think that others also may find that pleasure in his lucubrations, which he himself has experienced : and when that subject is not only pleasant, but grave and important ; not only important, but deeply interesting to his best feelings and his brightest hopes ; he begins to consider it as a duty that his own convictions should be made known, and that every ray of truth should be spread abroad which has appeared to enlighten his own mind. Under the influence of such impressions, I feel persuaded that the following strictures will be neither unacceptable nor uninteresting to him who has a taste for investigating the probable truth of mysterious subjects.

I wish not to enter the lists of controversy with any man, neither am I vain enough to suppose that my light will shine clear in the eyes of every one, particularly of those who have already formed their system, and fortified it with every learned and ingenious argument: but I may humbly trust; that I have a right to examine the soundness of such arguments, and even to oppose any prior system with an hypothesis which appears to me to approximate nearer to the true interpretation.

In order to gain a clear view, and to comprehend the meaning of the Apocalyptic writings, it seems to be convenient, and indeed necessary, to establish with precision the sense and scope of the visions contained in the book of the prophet Daniel, as these appear to be closely connected with what St. John afterwards saw.

The ground which I have chosen for my foundation is this, that both prophets had the same object, and that object is the Church of God; that states and kingdoms are no otherwise introduced, but as they

are connected with the Church, and must by no means be brought forward as principal objects of prophecy. To this I mean strictly to adhere, as a departure from this seems to me to have been a very efficient cause of confusion and difficulty.

Another point in which I have widely differed from other commentators is this; that I have considered the prophecies of Daniel separate from those of St. John. For though the visions of Daniel embrace the events of God's church from the time of the Babylonian captivity, to the consummation of its militant state on earth; and those of St. John beginning with the rise of Christianity, carry the history of the church down to the same period; yet is there this great difference; Daniel being a Jew, and living at the time when the Jewish was the visible church of God, and being most interested in the concerns of his own people, has chiefly confined his prophecies to the fortune of that people; leading us however into the Christian church with the change of dispensation, and again retiring to the

east, when the Roman empire was divided into east and west; in which division of the eastern empire and church he continues to the end. St. John, on the other hand, being an apostle of our Lord, has given us a full and particular account of the Christian church in the west, and has but in one instance clearly referred to the Jewish in the east; but the two accounts of the two prophets will combine both churches, and make one fold under one Shepherd.

It is an observation often made, and which can never be too often repeated, that in the midst of judgment God thinks upon mercy: and here we have two remarkable instances. At the time of the deep depression of the Jewish church, and when the whole people were groaning in captivity, suffering the due punishment of their sins, their spirits were cheered, their hopes revived, and they had the consolation of being assured that God would not utterly forsake them; and though they did not comprehend the intermediate circumstances, they understood enough to

give them full confidence in a final period to the calamities of their church and nation. At the time of St. John's apocalyptic visions, the church of Christ was in great distress; Christians saw themselves beset on every side by bitter enemies without, by false brethren within; their last and great apostle himself in banishment, sinking under the weight of years: but he also gave assurance to their hopes, and strengthened their confidence, that the gates of hell should not prevail against them, and that though they should be for a certain time a church militant, they should in the end become a church triumphant.

The two prophets thus consoling their respective churches, and keeping close the union of the two dispensations, have produced one grand display, which exhibits in the perfect conformity of its parts the entire history of God's church from the Babylonian captivity to the end of time. This seems to be a correct outline for expositors to fill up; they ought to keep the full view before their eyes, and work in conformity

with the whole, and not, as has been too much the practice, to select particular passages which will apply to some striking events just past or passing in the church militant, and upon such groundwork to press the remainder of the prophecies, so as to bear upon that particular point; thus forming a system, and supporting that system by forced interpretations. And it would be well if this were confined to the state of the church; but political events, having little or nothing to do with ecclesiastical matters, have been also seized upon for the accomplishment of prophecy; and even heathen history has been ransacked for a supply to the Christian church. Thus, for instance, the different forms of government in republican Pagan Rome have been considered as the heads of a beast representing Christian Rome, which were in being and were passed away centuries before Christianity was promulgated; and the late troubles in Europe have been represented as producing an apocalyptic beast in the late usurping emperor of the

west, who at most can be considered only as a head, and not the beast himself. I must protest against this sort of explanation; for it seems to me that the prophecies concerning the state of the Christian church can have nothing to do with Pagan Rome before she was connected with that church; nor can the overthrow of kingdoms be brought forward as a fulfilment of a prophecy concerning the church, any further than as they are connected with the state of the church.

I am not prepared to deny, that the late emperor of the west, or the troubles in Europe, may have some connection with the state of the church; on the contrary, I believe that they are much connected with it: but this is slippery ground, and we ought to be cautious, very cautious, how we place our steps; for we see these things as yet but through a mist of prejudice and error.

Another point upon which I shall much insist, and upon which I have constantly fixed my attention, arises from those two events, the most remarkable and most in-

teresting which have happened to the church since the first propagation of the Gospel; I mean, the conversion of the Roman empire to Christianity under Constantine, and the Reformation brought about by Luther. These extraordinary events have been much overlooked or misapplied, but I consider them of the utmost importance, and the two grand hinges upon which many of the prophecies turn. I am aware, that in this idea I have not one preceding commentator to support me: I feel a reverential awe in opposing myself to such a phalanx of abilities and learning, but I also feel myself encouraged by what seems to me important truth.

Again, there is another point for which I must contend, which is the mode of considering the Apocalypse of St. John. This is a grand and highly poetical book, rendered mysterious and difficult by its symbols and arrangement. But the symbols*

* In regard to symbols, I have taken much care to consider those things only as symbols which seem to be so used in Scripture, and I have constantly gone to Scripture for their solution.

may be so explained, I think, and its arrangement may be so stated, as to become intelligible to a common understanding. From not paying a due attention to the proper arrangement, much confusion has arisen : the great mistake appears to me to have been, the endeavour to give one regular series of unbroken historical events arising in the Christian church, corresponding to a supposed regular series of prophecy ; by following which plan, the commentator was often obliged to introduce political and civil affairs, and other extraneous matter ; to omit some events as unfulfilled, and to bring forward others as fulfilled ; to separate those things which ought to be together, and to intermix those which ought to be separate ; that he might make up a tolerable connexion, and form, if possible, a whole, to the satisfaction of the reader and of his own mind. But I am convinced that the mode of arrangement is designed to be very different. The apostle, in the first place, seems to me to have drawn one grand outline, which he after-

wards fills up with his colouring and figures, touching and retouching till he has given a finish to the whole^b. Thus the opening of the six first seals gives an account of the whole state of the church, from the first promulgation of the Gospel to the end of time, and contains the great outline to be filled up: the seventh seal introduces the seven angels with their trumpets; the four first of which amplify and improve upon the first four seals, and the three woe trumpets give a still higher colouring to the second, third, and fourth trumpets: the principal figures are then introduced, and fill up the whole picture. Thus a following circumstance is brought forward to expand, to amplify, and set in a clearer point of view, the foregoing. But this mode of arrangement is neither new, nor solely applicable to the Apocalypse; it is common amongst the older prophets, and it is decidedly the mode of Daniel. He gives us in the interpreta-

^b We are indebted to the excellent work of Dean Woodhouse for the first suggestion of this way of arranging the prophecies of the Apocalypse.

tion of Nebuchadnezzar's dream, a state of the church from the Babylonian captivity to the end of time. In his vision of the four beasts it is the same history within the same period, but much extended and amplified. In the vision of the ram and he-goat, the history is taken up at a later period, but extends to the end of time: then again comes the vision of the king of Grecia, which gives a full and ample account of many transactions which should intervene between the breaking of the great horn and the rise of the little one, with a further amplification of his character and his end. If then this be the mode of arrangement in Daniel's prophecies, why should not the same mode be adopted in St. John's? For my part I should as soon think of putting the dream of Nebuchadnezzar, the vision of the four beasts, the vision of the ram and he-goat, with that of

° How strange that Bishop Newton should so clearly see this arrangement in Daniel's prophecies, and not apply it to the Apocalypse! See Newton, vol. i. page 335.

the king of Grecia, in one unbroken series, as I should of arranging in the same series the seals, the trumpets, and the woes. I shall therefore adopt the same mode of arrangement for both prophets; and on this plan proceed to lay before my reader, in the first place, those prophecies of Daniel which foretell the future state of God's church, and are particularly connected with the Apocalypse. Secondly, those visions of the Apocalypse which seem to be already fulfilled, and are particularly connected with the prophecies of Daniel.

As I proceed in my exposition, I shall not fill out my pages with what others have said; but when I can fully assent to what they have said, I shall but just take the heads of their exposition, and refer my reader to their works.

It will be observed, that I have brought in question the names of two commentators only, that of Bishop Newton and of Dean Woodhouse, the former of whom I consider as the focus to which all the rays of his predecessors have converged, and

from which those of his successors have diverged; so that to attack his system then, is to attack the systems of all those who have misled him, and of all whom he may have misled. To the latter I have made continual reference, as I have built upon a principle of his own devising, though I have been forced to depart widely from his plan in the course of the work. But I trust that none of my observations on either of these distinguished commentators will be liable to the charge of petulance or rudeness, or be deemed deficient in that humility and respect which is due from me towards the long-established character of the one, and the eminent talents, profound learning, and exalted station of both.

I shall close this introduction by an observation upon what the sensible and learned editors of the new Family Bible have advanced at the end of their introduction to the Apocalypse. "In consideration, however, of the number of wild
" and perhaps mischievous theories con-

“cerning the times and persons to which
 “this opinion has usually led, it has been
 “thought advisable to restrict the notes
 “for this work to the long-established
 “opinion, that papal Rome is intended by
 “the Antichristian power.” This is wise
 and good, because in such a work as that
 in which the judicious editors were en-
 gaged, a rash adoption of a new theory
 might have led to greater errors and worse
 consequences than what have been felt
 and acknowledged in the old one. But
 this is no bar to the humble and temperate
 enquirer, who thinks that *he* also may add
 something to the light of truth. I do not
 flatter myself, nor do I, perhaps, wish that
 my theory (if such it is to be called) should
 be immediately adopted, but I do wish
 that it may be fairly weighed, and deeply
 considered, before it be rejected. For
 though I allow, as every one must allow,
 that the papal power of Rome forms one
 branch, and that a considerable branch
 too, of the power of Antichrist, yet I feel
 no doubt, that the Mahometan apostacy,

and the rising infidelity of the present times, have their full share also; and if without the impertinence of a fanciful imagination, I have fairly and soberly drawn my deductions from solid and well-grounded premises, I have a claim upon the attentions of my reader, which I trust will not be wholly devoid of profit to himself.

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PART I.
ON THE VISIONS OF DANIEL.



PRELIMINARY CHAPTER TO THE VISIONS OF
DANIEL.

BEFORE I enter upon the particular parts of the prophecies of Daniel, I wish to place before my reader a short, simple, and clear statement of what appears to me to be the history contained in them. I would have him always bear in mind, that it is the history of God's church, under the Jewish dispensation, expanding to the call of both Jews and Gentiles into the Christian covenant, and uniting both in one fold under one Shepherd, Jesus Christ.

But as Daniel himself was a Jew, and consequently more deeply concerned in the interests of his countrymen, he more particularly addresses himself to them, and foretells the fortunes of them, their city, and their country; and his subject leading him to speak of the Christian dispensation, which he does in general terms, up to the division of the Roman empire, yet he then reverts to his brethren in the East, and their country, till he brings the whole together at the great consummation.

Accordingly he begins by telling them that there were four great monarchies, with which they were or would be particularly connected,

and describes them so as that they may easily be understood by future generations to mean the Babylonian, the Persian, the Grecian, and the Roman. He again produces the same monarchies, under a different similitude, and gives a description of their manners and tyrannical conduct: he then drops the first as one that is passing, or almost passed away; (for he prophesied toward the end of the Babylonian captivity, when Babylon herself was about to sink for ever.) The fourth kingdom also he mentions no more as a whole; but traces the Eastern empire and church to the second and third, the Persian and Grecian kingdoms, which are again introduced under another figure. Here he shews, that the kingdom of Persia shall be invaded and overcome by the King of Grecia; Persia is then dropped, and he continues the history of the church through the kingdom of Grecia.

Alexander the Great having established his kingdom of Greece, it was immediately after, according to the prophecy, broken into four; and then the prophet goes on to inform us, that out of one of them should arise another power, who should extend his tyranny, his *ecclesiastical* tyranny, over God's church established in the *pleasant land*: by which I understand, and I trust that I shall make it appear, that this power must be the Mahometan.

The progress of the history here stops ; and, as if the prophet intended to comfort his people under the sense of this impending calamity, and to strengthen their spirits to bear a further developement, he returns to their deliverance from the Babylonian captivity, and foretells the time of the coming of the Messiah ; he cheers them with the account of the rebuilding of their city, and is particular in the time of the Messiah's appearance : he then touches upon their dispersion, and brings them to the consummation.

Having now set before them the glorious advent of the Messiah for their comfort, he reverts in the 11th chapter to the king of Grecia, and more minutely enters into the subject of his power, the breaking of that power, and its division into four parts ; drops two of those parts, as having no connection with the Jews, and pursues the history through the other two, Syria and Egypt, (between which the Holy Land being situated, was alternately oppressed by each,) till the power of the Romans is brought in view. Their transactions and the state of the church are then succinctly related, and Antichrist is again brought forward, in both his parts, the Roman as well as the Mahometan, in the plenitude of his power, his struggles, and his destruction. The times of his continuance, his predominancy, and his end, are then fixed and

determined ; and thus the whole is summed up in the second advent of our Lord.

In this outline, I am aware that I have given something which has much the appearance of a system ; but this, I trust, will not be condemned, when it shall appear to arise from the explication of the subject, and not the explication forced to maintain the system. I do not mean to enter into any critical discussion upon the book of Daniel. It falls neither within the scope of my plan nor the compass of my powers ; nor is there any need, it has been done by others fully competent to the task in abilities and learning, more especially by that excellent critic Mr. Wintle. But my object is, to address myself more particularly to the plain English reader with his Bible open before him ; and I trust that I shall furnish him with such a key, as may, with God's assistance, enable him to unlock the mysterious and important treasures of this obscure book of prophecy.

To begin then with the dream of Nebuchadnezzar.

DANIEL. CHAP. II.

NEBUCHADNEZZAR'S DREAM.

THE dream of Nebuchadnezzar would have been of little significance, and would not have been properly a vision of Daniel, had it not been specially revealed to the prophet, and enlarged upon by him; as it now stands, it becomes a prophetic vision of his.

Nebuchadnezzar saw in his dream an image, whose head was of gold; his breast and arms of silver; his belly and thighs of brass; and his legs of iron, with his feet part of iron and part of clay. The interpretation of Daniel as to the three first parts is very concise, calling them kingdoms, each inferior to the preceding, in the same proportion as the different metals by which they are described; but on the fourth he is more particular. These four kingdoms are allowed to be the Babylonian, the Persian, the Grecian, and the Roman. In this allowance there can be no hesitation; and where men more acute and learned than myself have so well trodden the ground to my entire satisfaction, I shall not trouble myself or my reader to trace their steps, but shall refer him for an explanation of the three first kingdoms to Bishop Newton's

Dissert. vol. i. p. 234. In regard to the fourth, I proceed to make the following observations.

Daniel's description of this kingdom in chap. ii. ver. 33. is, his legs of iron, his feet part of iron and part of clay: I have no hesitation in conceding this to be the Roman; but a question arises with me, which I think has not been decided with sufficient precision, viz. whether it comprehends the whole empire from its first rise to its dissolution, or whether it comprehends only one, or two, and which of the following divisions, viz. Rome consular and pagan, Rome imperial and pagan, Rome imperial and christian? The right solution of this question will go far in giving us a clear understanding of some of the future prophecies; and for a right solution we must closely attend to the prophet's interpretation. In the 40th verse, he says, "And the fourth kingdom shall be strong as iron:" this was the case with republican Rome, under its consular form; and if we admit the two legs to symbolize the two consuls, the image is so far correct: but the prophet goes on and says, "And whereas thou sawest the feet and toes, part of potter's clay and part of iron, the kingdom shall be divided; but there shall be in it of the strength of the iron, forasmuch as thou sawest the iron mixed with miry clay.

“ And as the toes of the feet were part of iron
 “ and part of clay, so the kingdom shall be
 “ partly strong and partly broken. And where-
 “ as thou sawest iron mixed with miry clay, they
 “ shall mingle themselves with the seed of men :
 “ but they shall not cleave one to another, even as
 “ iron is not mixed with clay.” Here then seems
 to be a time announced when the empire is to be
 weakened and divided, by a mixture of foreign
 materials with the genuine iron, and it is to be
 done by their mingling with the seed of men.
 This expression has its parallel in Genesis, chap.
 vi. verse 2. where “ the sons of God saw the
 “ daughters of men that they were fair; and
 “ they took them wives of all which they chose.”
 Now it is well known that during the conti-
 nuance of the Republic, the Romans fought
 their battles with the arm of their own citizens;
 but afterwards, when the empire was widely ex-
 tended, and their emperors had large frontiers
 to defend, and powerful competitors for the pur-
 ple to subdue, their armies were recruited first
 from the provinces, and ^a afterwards from their
 public enemies, even from the very Goths and
 Vandals, who were at length the destroyers of
 the unwieldy fabric. It was under the em-
 perors that this deterioration took place; Impe-
 rial Rome then is represented by the feet and

^a In the reign of Probus. Gibbon, vol. i. p. 338. 4to.

toes, when imposing strength had in it indeed its ancient iron, but was mixed up with the baser materials of miry clay; and the feet and toes will aptly symbolize the quick succession, or the coexistence of its several emperors: the germ, if I may so express myself, of the several growing powers being at first bound up as it were in one or two, as in the feet, and afterwards branching out into many, as in the toes.

I have here considered the mixture of the barbarous nations with the Romans only in a military point of view; because I wished to ascertain precisely the time when it became openly and apparently decisive as to its consequences, and to shew, that that time was under the imperial sway; but this military mixture was attended by alliances and intermarriages, which introduced a change of manners, morality, and even religion, for the worse, if it were possible: a deterioration was thus caused, which is well expressed by the iron mixed with clay. See Wintle's notes, page 34. This judicious writer also observes in his preceding page, that "perhaps the prophet would here (ver. 41.) allude to the iron in its rude state, as it is dug out of the mines; whereas at the end of the 43d verse, it must be understood in its wrought or manufactured state, or at least as extracted from the furnace."

Again he says, in page 34. "A finer sort of clay seems to be here meant, (ver. 43.) more adapted to the work of the potter, of which he might make vases or images." So that according to this acute critic, there seems to be a mixture of the coarser materials in the first instance, which afterwards became more refined, but still retaining its original weakness. Now this is the very trait which appears upon the times assigned by me for the feet and toes of the image. The great mixture of foreign nations with the Romans, though permitted, and in some degree countenanced, by the emperors previous to the reign of Probus, was openly and avowedly encouraged and extended by him, and such a mixture may well be supposed to be compounded of the roughest materials; in aftertimes these materials by use and attrition got a higher degree of polish and refinement, though they retained their original specific qualities; and accordingly we find, in the reign of Dioclesian, that particular period when the feet were constitutionally divided into toes, the sole power being by him divided into many, that the court of the emperor himself was become more like the Persian court, by the introduction of its customs and manners, its pomp, shew, and costume, even to the diadem

itself, that emblem of royalty so hated and abhorred by the ancient Romans.

Speaking of Augustus and Dioclesian, Mr. Gibbon says^b, "It was the aim of the one to disguise, and the object of the other to display, that unbounded power which the emperors possessed over the Roman world." A sure indication, I presume, of the confidence which the former had in his own strength, and the suspicion which the latter could not but feel in the heterogeneous compound of his extended but ill-jointed empire.

But the question still remains, whether this symbol embraces the whole of imperial Rome, pagan and Christian, or whether it is to be confined to only one of these periods, and to which. The 44th verse I think will clear up a part of this question: "And in the *days of these kings* shall the God of heaven set up a kingdom, which shall never be destroyed."

This kingdom, I presume, is indisputably the kingdom of the Messiah. Jesus Christ was born in the reign of Augustus Cæsar; imperial *pagan* Rome then is certainly symbolized. This is a most important point; and as it is so, I must consider it with some strictness. To the phrase "In the days of these kings" I have given an

^b Vol. i. p. 389. 4to.

application more particular than what is commonly understood. Bp. Newton interprets it to mean, in the time of the last of the four kingdoms. I have no other objection to this, but that it is too general, and does not mark the time of Christ's kingdom with sufficient precision ; and I think the context will bear me out in my particular application of it to the feet and toes, ver. 42. " And as the toes of the feet were " part of iron and part of clay, so the kingdom " shall be partly strong and partly broken." The feet and toes then are the kings. Again, ver. 43. " They shall mingle with the seed of " men," that is, the things signified by the feet and toes shall mingle. Again, ver. 44. " And " in the days of these kings shall the God of " heaven set up a kingdom." In the days of the feet and toes then was Christ's kingdom set up; the feet and toes must of consequence represent the *heathen* emperors, which is the point contended for. But it may be said, that as the feet and toes symbolize the Roman emperors, they may represent them throughout the whole continuance of the empire, Christian as well as pagan. I think a change of religion, a conversion to Christianity would have been noticed. I see no mark of diversity upon them, like that remarkable diversity which distinguishes Daniel's fourth beast from the other three ; and the little

horn from the other ten : and which I shall in due time endeavour to shew is a religious diversity.

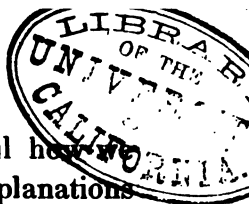
I am well aware that learned commentators have universally applied and confined the ten toes to ten kingdoms, into which the Roman empire was to be divided after its fall ; and it is with the deepest sense of diffidence that I feel myself constrained to controvert that opinion ; but I conceive it to be the groundwork of much confusion, and many mistakes. The precise and definite number of ten Christian kingdoms is ideal, and they have found it so ; for no two commentators have agreed in the particular kingdoms into which it was so divided. From these premises then I conclude that pagan Rome is to be understood in this part of the dream.

And it was the paganism of Rome and of the Roman world which was destroyed by the stone cut out without hands, when it smote the image upon his feet that were of iron and clay, and brake them to pieces. For let it be observed, that the stone strikes the image on its feet and toes, and destroys the whole. What is this, but the destruction of paganism by the conversion of the Roman empire to Christianity ? The toes were crushed before the empire was Christian.

And further let it be observed, that this is the only instance in the book of Daniel where monarchies or kingdoms, or powers of any description are represented by an *image*. They are all either beasts of some sort or other, or horns. St. John has followed in the same train of symbols. What is the meaning of this exception to the general rule? What does the image in particular symbolize? Beasts we find, and horns will aptly enough symbolize oppressive, tyrannical powers: this is something more, and to be more particularly marked. And we may reasonably suspect that something particular is designed; it seems evident to me that the quality of the symbol will lead us to a right solution. The quality of an image in Scripture is idolatry; that of wild beasts, fierceness, tyranny, and oppression. Accordingly, when the symbol of the image is used, idolatry is the prominent feature: it was the heathen idolatry of these kingdoms which was to be destroyed, which destruction we see at this day has taken place in them all. When the symbol of the beasts is used, tyranny is its leading characteristic; and we know, that however tyrannical these kingdoms were over the church of God, their idolatry was in the back ground; it made no impression upon the church; so far from it, that it was itself ameliorated, and softened

down, and at last converted, by its connection with the church. Thus again, an image as a symbol is but once produced by St. John, and it is at the very time, when idolatry or image worship was established in the Church of Rome, as will appear, when I come to the second beast of the Apocalypse: from hence I conclude, that the image of Daniel is a symbol, and the symbol of idolatry; it is a most important point, and I wish to have it well considered. An image then, I conceive, is a fit emblem of idolatry and heathen worship. It is the paganism of these kingdoms which is here portrayed, and it is their paganism which the prophet had here in view; he says nothing of their tyranny: afterwards, when he brings them forward under the similitude of beasts, their tyranny then stands prominent, and their religion is only hinted at, under the term of diversity: all then that is circumscribed within the image is pagan—pagan from the crown to the toe.

I am aware that Bishop Newton considers the image as a fit emblem of human power. “It appears,” says he, (vol. i. p. 233.) “from ancient coins and medals, that cities and people were often represented by figures of men and women. A great and terrible human figure was therefore not an improper emblem of human power and dominion.” But in the first



place, I think, we ought to be careful how we apply to heathen authorities for explanations of Scripture emblems; and this is far from being a case in point that requires such illustration. Where a term is used explanatory of a thing, continually coupled with that thing, and often standing by itself for that thing, as the term image does throughout Scripture for idolatry, we need not go to the heathen authorities of ancient coins and medals for an explanation of what is so plainly before us. In the second place, it is said, "And the form thereof was terrible." In what was this image terrible? The human shape is not terrible in the eyes of man, extend it to what amplitude you please; nor are men much terrified by the greatness of power and dominion. It was not then because it was a great human figure that it was terrible, as Newton seems to think; but its form (or aspect, as Wintle translates it) was terrible, because it appeared in the form of idolatry. It was an image, the emblem of idolatry, which startled the devout eye of the *Jew*, and alarmed his zeal for the honour of his God. Idolatry is also terrible both in its foundation and system: heathen worship was built on terror, and its sacrifices were often polluted with human gore. In the third place, it does not appear that this image represented the human

shape at all ; in none of its described parts are there any but the arms peculiar to man: we have no business to consider it as any thing but an image, the emblem of idolatry : we are always too prone to fill up the prophet's sketch with our own imaginations and fancies, thus building monstrous systems, and running into incongruous absurdities. The prophet's sketch is neither more nor less than this, that four idolatrous powers in succession should have the dominion over the church till the kingdom of Christ should break down the kingdom of satan, and make it like the chaff of the summer threshing floors.

This grand point, that the feet and toes of the image represent *the heathen* emperors of Rome, which I consider as the corner stone of my whole hypothesis, being thus, as I trust, established, I proceed now to the consideration of the next vision.

DANIEL. CHAP. VII.

DANIEL'S VISION OF THE FOUR BEASTS.

HAVING in the preceding chapter considered what appears to me the true meaning of Nebuchadnezzar's dream, I shall now proceed to consider Daniel's own vision of the four beasts ; which is so similar, that it may seem to be little more than an expansion of the former, but it is an expansion which embraces and amplifies very considerable matters, and is big with many important affairs.

“ I saw,” says the Prophet, “ in my vision by
“ night, and, behold, the four winds of the hea-
“ ven strove upon the great sea. And four great
“ beasts came up from the sea, *diverse* one from
“ another. The first was like a lion, and had
“ eagle's wings : I beheld till the wings thereof
“ were plucked, and it was lifted up from the
“ earth, and made stand upon the feet as a man ;
“ and a man's heart was given to it. And, be-
“ hold, another beast, a second, like to a bear,
“ and it raised up itself on one side, and it had
“ three ribs in the mouth of it between the teeth
“ of it : and they said thus unto it, Arise, devour
“ much flesh. And after this, I beheld, and, lo,
“ another, like a leopard, which had upon the
“ back of it four wings of a fowl ; the beast had

“ also four heads ; and dominion was given to
 “ it. After this I saw in the night visions, and,
 “ behold, a fourth beast, dreadful and terrible,
 “ and strong exceedingly ; and it had great
 “ iron teeth : it devoured and brake in pieces,
 “ and stamped the residue with the feet of it :
 “ and it was *diverse* from all the beasts that
 “ were before it ; and it had ten horns. I con-
 “ sidered the horns, and, behold, *there came up*
 “ *among them* another little horn, before whom
 “ there were three of the first horns plucked up
 “ by the roots : and, behold, in this horn were
 “ eyes like the eyes of a man, and a mouth
 “ speaking great things.”

As the prophet Daniel has not dwelt on his
 explanation of the three first beasts, I shall dis-
 miss them after a few observations. They evi-
 dently run parallel to the three first monarchies
 of the image, and the first is so descriptive of
 the king of Babylon, that it cannot be mistaken.
 “ The Lord shall bring a nation against thee
 “ from far, as swift as the eagle flieth^c.” And
 Jeremiah says, “ The lion is come up from his
 “ thicket, and the destroyer of the Gentiles is
 “ on his way^d.” And in this book of Daniel
 it is said, “ Till his hairs were grown like
 “ eagles’ feathers^e.” For the description of the
 other two beasts I will refer my reader to

* Deut. xxviii. 49. ^d Jer. iv. 7. * Dan. iv. 33.

Bishop Newton's Dissertation on the Prophecies^f; and Mr. Wintle^g, only observing, that as the first beast is evidently the Assyrian monarchy, it follows that the two next are the Persian and the Grecian.

My next observation is on the 12th verse of this chapter, which states, "As concerning the rest of the beasts, they had their dominion taken away; yet their lives were prolonged for a season and a time." A season and a time is the space of two prophetic years, or 720 days, that is 720 years: now this prolongation of their lives, or continuation of their existence, I understand to embrace the whole era between the foundation of the Babylonian monarchy and the absorption of these monarchies in the vortex of the Roman empire: the Babylonian monarchy was founded in the year 747^h before Christ. Octavius Cæsar, subverted the remains of the Grecian monarchy under Cleopatra, the last of the Ptolemies, in the year before Christ 30, and was by the unanimous consent of the Senate and people of Rome confirmed Emperor of Rome under the name of Augustus, which he and his successors ever after bore, in the year 27 before Christ. So that from the first foundation of the Babylonian monarchy,

^f Vol. i. p. 257. ^g Page 98. ^h See Prideaux's Connection. Wintle, n. 15. Newton, vol. i. p. 223.

to the establishment of the Roman, which consolidated the remains of the Grecian, viz. Egypt, Syria, and more particularly Judea, into one great empire, was exactly 720 years ⁱ.

I shall now turn my attention to what may appear in the form of a difficulty: I am not aware of having seen it noticed by any one, and shall therefore without hesitation offer my own solution.

In the 3d verse of this chapter the Prophet sees four beasts coming up from the *sea*; in the 17th verse he interprets these four beasts to be four kings which shall arise out of the *earth*. Literally taken, this is impossible; what then is the metaphor, and how is the metaphor to be reconciled with the symbol? That the sea is a symbol representing the Gentile world is, I think, clearly to be understood from many passages of Scripture, but I shall refer my reader to what Dean Woodhouse has advanced upon this subject ^k. If then the sea represents the Gentile world, the earth may be considered as the symbol of that part which is within the pale

ⁱ The precise period, however, when Nebuchadnezzar began to reign in Babylon is of the highest importance to be known, since Ptolemy, and all succeeding astronomers, calculate their years from their commencement of that era, which is generally fixed for the 747th year before Christ. Vid. Maurice's App. to Ruins of Babylon, p. 38.

^k Woodhouse, Ap. p. 213.

of God's church ; for this also I have the authorities of Woodhouse¹, Hammon^m, and Lardnerⁿ. Here then are four monarchies coming from among the Gentiles, and rising, or extending their dominion, over the people of God : they are of a twofold nature, they are Gentile monarchies, but connected with the church ; had they not been connected with the Jews, they would have been nothing more than other kings of the world, who are overlooked by the Prophet : had they arisen only in Israel, they would have been unnoticed with the other idolatrous kings of the Jews ; but arising in the Gentile world, and assuming dominion over the people and church of God, they formed that sort of civil and ecclesiastical compound of idolatrous tyranny, which constitutes the character of a prophetic beast °.

¹ Woodhouse, Ap. p. 211. ^m Hammond, Luke vii.

ⁿ Lardner, vol. i. p. 241.

° It has been suggested to me, that the earth in this place is not symbolical, because the angel is here giving Daniel an explanation of the former symbols. It may be so, then the earth stands in the common acceptation of the word for the whole terraqueous globe, and the difficulty immediately vanishes. But as the angel is found in other places to give explanations in language almost as obscure as the text itself, insomuch as that Daniel himself confesses that " he heard " but understood not," (chap. xii. 8.) we may have a reasonable suspicion that the earth in this place is also symbolical, and then the explanation which I have given must stand.

The fourth beast of Daniel I wish to have well understood, because I think that he has been too much confounded with the Apocalyptic beasts, and I feel satisfied, that a right exposition of this symbol will throw much light upon what follows, and clear our way for much of our future structure.

This beast has been considered by all our commentators as symbolic of the Roman empire; and rightly so: it follows from what I have already advanced. He is a counterpart to the fourth monarchy of the image, and his iron teeth indicate the Roman constitution; but I am afraid that his peculiar traits have been forcibly bent to elucidate some preconceived opinion, or to support some favourite hypothesis. Let us consider him without prejudice.

The prophecy in Daniel is this: "After this I saw in the night visions, and behold
 "a fourth beast, dreadful and terrible, and
 "strong exceedingly; and it had great iron
 "teeth: it devoured and brake in pieces, and
 "stamped the residue with the feet of it: and it
 "was *diverse* from all the beasts that were before it; and it had ten horns.

"I considered the horns, and, behold, there
 "*came up among them* another little horn, before
 "whom there were three of the first horns

“ plucked up by the roots : and behold in this
 “ horn were eyes like the eyes of man, and a
 “ mouth speaking great things.”

The first thing which I would observe in the description of this symbolical beast is his *diversity* from the others. We are told in the 3d verse, that the four beasts were *diverse* from each other ; and in this 7th verse, that the fourth beast was *diverse* from all the beasts that were before it. This *repetition* ^a of diversity is a strong mark of notation, that in this beast it was very great. Now the prophet most assuredly did not single out these empires from the other great kingdoms of the world, but as they were particularly connected with the church of God ; he did not mean particularly to distinguish the political constitution of each, for this did not bear upon his point, but their mode of religious worship, which eventually *did* bear on it ; and in this there was a remarkable diversity, both general from each other, and particular in this beast from all. This difference was as follows.
^b The Chaldæans were followers of the Sabian superstition, and were worshippers of the sun and planetary system as mediators between

^a “ And for that the dream was doubled unto Pharaoh
 “ twice, it is because the thing is established by God ; and
 “ God will shortly bring it to pass,” Gen. xli. 32.

^b Prideaux's Connection, vol. i. p. 139.

God and man : this was only one step, though a great deviation from true religion. The Persians were Magians, and not only were worshippers of the sun, but also supporters of the two principles of good and evil : this was a greater corruption, and a total departure from the worship of one only God. The Greeks were Polytheists, and worshipped departed men under the name of heroes ; they however were averse to the introduction of foreign gods into the catalogue of their divinities^c. The Romans were not only Polytheists, but picked up gods wherever they could find them : they worshipped all or any, and crowded their Pantheon with the deities of all their conquered nations^d. This then was the diversity seen among the four beasts, and this also was the inferiority portrayed by the different metals in Nebuchadnezzar's dream : but still the great diversity in the

^c And so jealous were the Greeks of their worship when once established, that the Athenians had a law, which made it death to introduce any new deities. Potter's Ant. b. i. chap. 19, 26. Upon this law St. Paul was arraigned, and Socrates condemned.

^d Speaking of the Christians, Tacitus says, Auctor nominis ejus Christus, Tiberio imperitante, per procuratorem Pontium Pilatum supplicio affectus erat. Repressaque in præsens exitiabilis superstitio rursus erumpebat, non modo per Judæam originem ejus mali, sed per urbem etiam, quo cuncta undique atrocitas aut pudenda confluent, celebranturque. Tac. Ann. lib. xv. 44.

fourth beast was to follow, which so particularly regarded the church, and had so much influence upon it; and that was, the conversion of the Roman empire to Christianity. In this did the fourth beast so widely differ from all the others; in this consisted his great diversity.

The next remarkable appearance in this beast is, his ten horns. Here all the commentators have been extremely at a loss, and yet all have agreed that they denote ten kingdoms, into which the Roman empire should be divided at its dissolution: they all take for granted, that it was divided into ten, but they do not agree which were the ten, or which three of the ten were rooted up by the little horn. Much of this difficulty would vanish, if we were to consider the number ten as a round indefinite number; and that it may be so considered, we have the high, the great, and respectable authority of Bishop Hurd^e, Dr. Lardner^f, and Dean Woodhouse^g; and history will bear us out in the fact, that Rome was for the most part under the government of several ruling powers at one and the same time. Under its republican form we find its governors were consuls, and tribunes,

^e Hurd, Warb. Lect. vol. ii. p. 193. ^f Lardner, vol. viii. p. 337. ^g Woodhouse, Apoc. p. 316.

decemvirs, and triumvirs : it became a sole empire indeed under the Cæsars, with some exceptions, till the time of Dioclesian, when it was divided by him under several masters, so that, as Gibbon tells us^b, “ there were six emperors “ reigning at one and the same time ;” and if we except a few years at the latter part of the reign of Constantine, it has remained divided from that time to this. The Roman empire then has been remarkable for its many masters, and we may perhaps apply the symbol of the ten horns indefinitely to those masters.

I was once much inclined to adopt this interpretation, but I found that it did not come close enough to the point. There is a remarkable and designed parallelism between this beast and the fourth kingdom of the image, and the ten horns symbolize the same things as the toes. As therefore I have shewn that the toes were kings or emperors at the latter end of the pagan monarchy, it follows that the horns were kings at the same time ; and as three of them were to be rooted up by a power rising among them, it carries upon the face of it a strong appearance of definiteness, at least in this place : if then we can find exactly ten emperors coexisting at or near the same time within a particular period,

^b Vol. i. p. 414. 4to. vol. ii. p. 200. 8vo.

immediately before the conversion of the Roman empire, we have our ten pagan horns, and the number ten is definite.

Mr. Gibbon, in his 13th chapter, gives us an account of a very particular period of the Roman empire, included between the exaltation of Dioclesian to the purple in the year 248, and the sole dominion of Constantine in 324. Dioclesian on his accession to the empire made many changes in its constitution, and amongst others, one, which strongly bears upon the point before us. He divided the power under four emperors, reserving the first place, that of Augustus, to himself and Maximian; and creating two inferiors, Galerius and Constantius, under the title Cæsar: it so happened, that by the turbulence of some, and the impatience and policy of others, the numbers were unduly increased, and we find sometimes five, sometimes six emperors reigning at one and the same time; but what is remarkable, the number of emperors constitutionally appointed and reigning within this period is exactly *ten*. They are as follows; Dioclesian, Maximian, Galerius, Constantius, Carausius, Constantine, Severus, Maximin, Maxentius, and Licinius. Most of these emperors were coexistent, and Constantine himself was co-emperor, with six of the others. He immediately succeeded his father Constantius,

was elevated to the purple within fifteen months after the abdication of Dioclesian, during his life time, and within twelve years after the death of Carausius: be it also observed, that eight of these were not only heathens, but persecuting tyrants; that Constantius who put a stop to persecution in his provinces, and was a nursing father to the Christians, never affected to be a Christian himself; and even Constantine throughout his life was as much a heathen as a Christian, and did not submit to the rite of baptism till a little before his death. Well may then these ten be considered as the ten pagan emperors of Rome, symbolized by the toes of the image and the ten horns of the beast.

I trust I have made it sufficiently apparent, that this beast is not only the Roman, but the Roman *pagan* beast, at least as far as his ten horns are concerned¹: I have pointed out the

¹ Another idea has taken place in the minds of those who adhere to Newton's hypothesis of the ten kingdoms, into which Rome was supposed to be divided at its fall; that these are indefinite as to number, and are in existence from the fall, to the second advent; but if I have proved my point, that this image is the symbol of idolatry, it must in that case be made to comprehend more than the four kingdoms, contrary to Daniel's interpretation; for the idolatry then to be destroyed is the idolatry of the whole world, wheresoever it may exist. Roman paganism was crushed in the days of Constantine. Upon the right understanding of

distinctive qualities of Rome, in his iron teeth, I have shewn the parallel between the toes of the image and the ten horns of the beast, proving that they were the ten last emperors of pagan Rome, and have explained the first gradation of diversity between this beast and the others. But his most notable diversity is still to arise, viz. his conversion to Christianity; and for this we must look to the little horn: he has hitherto been considered as pagan only, the little horn, I presume^k, makes him Christian.

But I shall not here fully discuss the little horn; he will come before us in another place, where it will be necessary, and more appropriate, to enter into a minute investigation of him. I shall now only point out those characteristics which may bring him into comparison with the little horn of the he goat, to which Daniel is now about to lead us. Who or what he is

the nature of the image, every thing depends, and I do not fear to rest my cause upon the foundation which I have laid.

^k The stone cut out of the rock without hands is Christianity; the stone, viz. Christianity, destroys the ten toes, with the other parts of the image. The little horn which rises amongst the ten destroys three of the ten; now if the toes of the image and horns of the beast symbolize the same things, of which no commentator has yet had a doubt, the little horn and the stone must be connected, the little horn must be Christian.

will appear hereafter. Every commentator has hitherto considered him as the representative of the papacy; this I shall pass over *for the present*, because I am unwilling by a long argument to confuse my subject.

The account of the little horn in ver. 8. is this. "I considered the horns, and, behold, *"there came up among them another little horn, before whom there were three of the first horns plucked up by the roots:* and, behold, in this horn were eyes like the eyes of man, and a mouth speaking great things. Ver. 24. And the ten horns out of this kingdom are ten kings that shall arise; *and another shall arise after them;* and he shall be diverse from the first, and he shall subdue three kings. 25. And he shall speak great words against the Most High, and *shall wear out the saints of the Most High,* and think to change times and laws: and *they shall be given into his hand until a time and times and the dividing of time.* 26. But the judgment shall sit, *and they shall take away his dominion, to consume and to destroy it unto the end.*"

From this statement of the prophet we may remark, that after the establishment of the ten kings or horns, the little horn rises among them, by stealth as it were, and unperceived; as soon as he is sufficiently strong to assert his power

into which he has been continually growing, he subdues three of the kings, plucks them up by the roots; he grievously oppresses and persecutes the saints, over whom he has dominion for a certain period; the saints then break his yoke from off their necks, and destroy not him, but wait and consume his dominion unto the end.

These are the traits upon which I would have my reader fix his attention, as I shall again produce them when we come to the little horn of the he goat.

Daniel having now conducted us into Christian Rome, and pointed out the road which leads into the western part of the church, drops the Roman beast, and reverts to the two former, of Persia and Grecia, which open the road straight forward into the eastern.—We must follow in his track.

DANIEL. CHAP. VIII.

THE VISION OF THE RAM AND THE GOAT.

THIS vision has already had its interpretation by the angel who attended Daniel, and its application to the Persian and Greek monarchies has been so clearly illustrated by history, that no one can mistake it: but when we come to the little horn of the goat, the interpretation of this symbol has not been equally allowed by every one. It will be therefore useful to consider it attentively.

I will now state that part of the vision which I mean to take into our present contemplation: it begins in the 9th verse of the 8th chapter.

“ And out of one of them came forth a little
“ horn, which waxed exceeding great, toward
“ the south, and toward the east, and toward
“ the pleasant land. And it waxed great, even
“ to the host of heaven; and it cast down some
“ of the host, and of the stars to the ground,
“ and stamped upon them. Yea, he magnified
“ himself even to the prince of the host, and by
“ him the daily sacrifice was taken away, and
“ the place of his sanctuary was cast down.
“ And an host was given him against the daily
“ sacrifice by reason of transgression, and it cast

“ down the truth to the ground ; and it practised, and prospered.” The angel’s interpretation is as follows, ver. 23 : “ And in the latter time of their kingdom, when the transgressors are come to the full, a king of fierce countenance, and understanding dark sentences, shall stand up. And his power shall be mighty, but not by his own power : and he shall destroy wonderfully, and shall prosper, and practise, and shall destroy the mighty and the holy people. And through his policy also he shall cause craft to prosper in his hand ; and he shall magnify himself in his heart, and by peace shall destroy many : he shall also stand up against the Prince of princes ; but he shall be broken without hand.”

This interpretation is nearly as obscure as the original text, and designedly so ; nevertheless it emits some light, and will help us in understanding the vision.

It has been my plan hitherto to avoid as much as possible the discussion of what has been advanced by others, satisfying myself with proposing what appears to me to be the true meaning ; but the interpretations of this vision, which for the most part are two, have been so confidently proposed, and so strenuously upheld by the most able advocates on each side, that it seems

necessary for me to give a reason why I am disposed to reject them both.

For a full discussion upon this subject I will refer my reader to Bishop Newton on the Prophecies ; who strongly oppugns the application of the little horn to Antiochus Epiphanes, and has given his arguments at great length in his endeavours to fix it upon the Roman power.

Those who contend that the symbol prefigures Antiochus Epiphanes, have certainly two strong reasons on their side ; one from the 9th verse, “ And out of one of them came forth a “ little horn ;” and the other from the 23d verse, “ And in the latter time of their kingdom.” The description and the transactions also of the little horn will for the most part *well apply* to Antiochus. But notwithstanding this, I think were there no other arguments against his claim, Antiochus Epiphanes is not of sufficient dignity and consequence to be the subject of this prophecy. Daniel is prophesying of the affairs of God’s church and people ; it is true, Antiochus interfered with them, and mightily and grievously oppressed them ; so did others, Caligula for instance, but the oppression lasted only a short time ; it passed away with him, and left no results. We cannot suppose that a prophecy such as this, ushered in with so much prepara-

tion, and foreboding so much and long continued calamity to God's people, should end in such a vapour as this. But, say the advocates of this opinion, he was a type of some greater event. If by this it is meant that the little horn of the goat, representing Antiochus Epiphanes, is a type of the little horn of the beast representing the Roman papacy, it cannot stand, because it includes this confusion, that the thing typified stands in the prophecy before its type. I shall now proceed to the 9th verse, "And out of one of them came forth a little horn." It is granted, Antiochus Epiphanes was a descendant and successor of one of the four horns; this is but a negative claim, there were many who might make the same upon the same ground; unsupported then it falls: but he is supported by the 23d verse, "And in the *latter* time of their kingdom;" Antiochus began to reign in the year 174 before Christ, towards the latter end of the kingdom of Syria; and therefore his claim is strong: but on the following words, "when the transgressors are come to the full," Bishop Newton brings forward an incontrovertible argument; he says, "Antiochus Epiphanes might be said indeed to stand up in the latter time of their kingdom, because Macedonia, the first of the four kingdoms, was conquered, and reduced into a Roman province during his reign.

But, says he, when he stood up, the transgressors in the Jewish nation were not come to the full; for when he began to reign, Onias was high priest of the Jews, and the temporal as well as the ecclesiastical government was at this time in the hands of the high priest; and this Onias was a most worthy good magistrate, as well as a most venerable and pious priest; as the author of the second book of Maccabees saith, (2 Mac. iii. 1.) “ The “ holy city was inhabited with all peace, and “ the laws were kept very well, because of the “ godliness of Onias the high priest, and his “ hatred of wickedness.” Antiochus then began his reign before the transgressors were come to the full, and therefore cannot be the man.

The Bishop having thus disposed of Antiochus, hastens to establish his own hypothesis, that of the Roman power. The difficulty of confuting this hypothesis lies chiefly in stating clearly what it is that the Bishop means. By the conquest of Macedonia, which took place 166 years before Christ, the Romans became the representatives of, or rather one of, the four horns of the goat; and their power, which thus grew out of Macedonia, increased, till it spread itself over the whole of the Grecian empire. Now this is what the Bishop conceives to be the little horn coming out of one of them, and he of

course ought to apply the transactions of the little horn to this power at this time ; for I contend that these transactions must be confined to this power whilst it was the little horn coming out of *one* of them only, and must therefore be circumscribed within the period between the year A. C. 166, the year of the Macedonian conquest, and 133, when the Romans seized upon a second Grecian kingdom, Pergamos, and thus became the representatives of a second horn, otherwise the little horn is standing up out of *two*: but the Bishop's object is to keep the transactions in abeyance till the year 606 after Christ, the date which he gives to the rise of the papal power. Thus the little horn does not shew himself till he is to be seen standing out of all four. But waving this, I will give the Bishop the fullest scope, and, for argument's sake, will admit that the little horn stood out of one of them at the time that Antiochus Epiphanes had greatly corrupted the Jewish nation; which corruption the Bishop understands to be the transgression at the full. Now let us apply the test, that test which he has himself so successfully applied to the claims of Epiphanes; Were the transgressors at this time come to the full? Would he, or will any man, say, that the transgressors were come to the *full* before the crucifixion of our Lord? Whatever weight this ar-

gument has against Antiochus, it has more than double the weight against the power of Rome. This consideration alone appears to me sufficient to overturn the hypothesis of Newton, on which I shall therefore dwell no longer, although there are many other objections and arguments that might be urged against it.

A third hypothesis has been started of late years ; it is to be found in the introductory chapter to the second volume of Mr. Kett's History the Interpreter of Prophecy ; but as the author of that chapter allows the two former interpretations to stand, and but partially applies the Mahometan power to the little horn of the goat, it must be my business to shew that this little horn prefigures the impostor Mahomet, and him only. I perfectly agree with that author, that Antichrist comprehends the Papal, the Mahometan, and the Infidel powers, but this I presume is not the place for their union ; the two first arise separately in their different branches, act their parts in their allotted stations, are united in the third, and shall meet their final judgment together, " when the beast and false prophet shall be taken, and both cast alive " into the lake of fire burning with brimstone."

I shall now endeavour to fix the Mahometan apostacy upon the ground from which I think I have successfully driven Antiochus Epiphanes

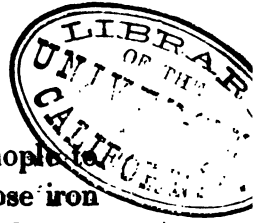
and the Roman power. We must revert once more to the 9th and 23d verses, "And out of " one of them came forth a little horn:" Mahomet did not establish his religion or his power till he was master of Mecca; from that time the Mussulman armies poured into Syria, and out of Syria they came down upon Jerusalem. Here then did the little horn stand out of, or come forth from, one of the four: "And in the " latter time of *their* kingdom," not the time of *his* kingdom, the kingdom of one horn only, but of *their* kingdom, the kingdom of the four horns, or the whole Grecian empire.

To the word *latter* I affix a sense more definite and strict; not consonant, if not contrary, I believe, to the opinion of most learned commentators. But to enter upon the support of my opinions in this place, would lead me too far from the subject which now presses itself upon our attention; I must therefore reserve what I have further to say on this head for a separate article in the Appendix.

Now though this word *latter* is an adjective of comparison, implying a former and a last, commentators have agreed to consider the *latter* and the *last* as almost, if not altogether, synonymous terms, and have produced the little horn just before what they consider the end of the Grecian kingdom, understanding that its

final dissolution took place under Augustus Cæsar. But this is not the fact; the Grecian empire, though from this time forming a part of the Roman, was ever considered by the Roman as the Grecian, and was so denominated; nay, she even reared her proud and lofty head in defiance of the metropolis of the western world; and, moreover, at this day assumes the appellation of the Grecian empire in opposition to the Roman*. As therefore the expression is the latter time of *their* kingdom, we must comprehend the whole existence of the Grecian kingdom from the beginning to the end; and we must look for three marked and distinguished periods in her existence, corresponding to the former, the latter, and the last: such periods are easily found; the first beginning with Alexander, and ending with Cleopatra, when the whole was annexed to the Roman empire, under Augustus; who took away the lives of the three beasts, by extinguishing the former rulers and governors of this once splendid empire: the second period is from this annexation to

* That the Grecian empire was understood by the Prophet to have its existence from the time of Alexander to the second advent, is clear from the answer given by the angel in chap. viii. ver. 14; for the vision there referred to is the vision of the goat, and is to last 2300 years. Antiochus Epiphanes then, who began his reign 176 years before Christ, can never be placed in the *latter* end of their kingdom, in any sense of the word.



the time of the surrender of Constantinople to the Turk, in the year 1453; under whose iron sway the Grecian empire has groaned ever since, and this forms the third period. Here then is the former time of the kingdom, the latter, and the last. In the latter time we are to look for the little horn, and he appears under the baneful crescent of Mahomet. "When the transgressors are come to the full," the latter time being a long one, it became the more necessary to mark the exact period of time with the greater precision; and perhaps a stronger mark could not have been given, or one more descriptive of the time when Mahomet appeared, than the fulness of transgression. I have before hinted that the transgressors could not be said to be come to the full before the crucifixion of our Lord, but I did not mean to pronounce that they were then; for though the wickedness of the Jews in that transaction was very great, and they by committing it stamped themselves with the seal of Satan, yet there were many great and good men amongst them, true worshippers of God, and converts to the doctrine of our Saviour; and we doubt not but that many who joined in the cry of Crucify him, crucify him, did it like St. Paul, in the ignorance of unbelief. The sum of wickedness amongst them was undoubtedly very great, but had by no means

come up to the description which we afterwards have of it at the siege of Jerusalem. At this time their cup of *general* wickedness appears to be full indeed ; but the prophet, if I understand him right, seems to have respect to something more than *general* wickedness ; something particularly affecting the church of God, that church of whose affairs he was prophesying, that church which was not now amongst the Jews ; for it had departed from them, and rested amongst the Jews and Gentiles who had obeyed the call to the Christian covenant. The transgressors then are those who departed from the faith once delivered to the saints : and at the time of Mahomet's appearance, no age, no church, not even Rome herself in the darkest ages, ever witnessed such a medly Christianity, composed of Heathenism, Judaism, and Gnosticism, with its variety of schisms and heresies branching and sprouting out of that pestiferous sect, as then disgraced the Grecian church. Had not Mahomet found the soil thus ready prepared, thus richly manured with the rottenness of corruption, and watered to his hand by the poisonous flood from the dragon's mouth, he would not have dared to plant his deadly upas tree, and from under its branches circumscribe with his bloody scymitar an empire which astonished and for ages has amazed the world.

Let us now attend to the sacred text, and observe, that the little horn is a tyrannous power or king, not inheriting power of his own, but gaining it by the help of others; he is to succeed by the exercise of his understanding and craft, he is to practise and prosper, and to destroy wonderfully, particularly the *mighty* and *holy* people^b; and by peace shall he destroy many and, above all, he shall stand up against the Prince of princes: he is to arise within the precincts of one of the late kingdoms, and at a time when the transgressors shall be come to the full. We see in this horn the same tyranny, the same religious tyranny and overbearing character which we observed in the former symbols: but he begins and proceeds in his career by dark sentences and craft, by mysterious revelations and persuasion; he destroys not only by the sword but seduction, not only the mighty but the holy people, not only in war but in peace, and he sets himself up against the Prince of princes, our Lord Jesus Christ. He arises at a time when the transgressors are come to the full, and stretches his dominion over the south, and the east, and the *pleasant land*. I think that no description of the impostor Mahomet can be given more applicable to him

^b The Grecian empire and people who worshipped the true God.

than this: he retires to his cave, and there hatches his pretended mysterious revelation; he comes forth, and persuades a few; by their help his tenets spread, by their assistance he is raised to power, and establishes that power by the possession of Mecca in the year 630: from thence he pushes his dominion, with the sword in one hand and the Koran in the other, four hundred leagues towards the south and towards the east, which included the *pleasant land* of Judea. His Koran is a medley of dark sentences; he prospers no less by his craft than by his sword, for he formed his religion to suit the different tastes, the different manners, the vicious and corrupt inclinations of the people he laboured to convert as well as to subdue; to gain the Jew, he revered Moses; to entice the Christian, he acknowledged the authority of Jesus Christ; and to reconcile all, he gave a sanction to their worst passions, and indulged their fiercest appetites. He appeared also at a time when all seemed ripe for such an apostacy, when the transgressors were come to the full; when Judaism was degraded, Christianity corrupted, and heathenish customs, rites, and manners seemed to preponderate in the mixture of all. But whatever reverence he might pay to Moses or Christ, however he might acknow-

° See White's Bampton Lectures.

ledge the divinity of their missions, he set up his own as superior to theirs, and exalted himself above the Prince of princes.

Thus far the angel's interpretation has made the vision to be more readily comprehended ; but there are two points upon which he has not touched, and which explained according to my apprehension will fix this vision upon the Arabian impostor, and on no one else ; I mean the daily sacrifice being taken away, and the length of the vision.

In regard to the first, it is necessary to understand clearly what is meant by the daily sacrifice ; if we are to confine it to the Jewish rite, we shall find that this was taken away or suspended at three different times, by Nebuchadnezzar, by Antiochus Epiphanes, and by the Romans. By the two first, it was only suspended for a time, and the Romans warred not against the *religion* of the Jews, they regarded not their superstitions (as they called them) or their ceremonies, these were every where tolerated ; but their object was to break the political power of this contumacious people, to bend them to their yoke, and to quell their turbulent dispositions ; and this they conceived was the more easily to be done, by destroying their city and temple, and driving them out of their country. Not so the Mahometan conquerors ; they laid their

axe at the root of religion, they conquered only that they might convert; they gave their vanquished foe his country, but subverted his religion. But after all, what was the Jewish sacrifice^d? what, but a type of that purer mode of worship to be established by the Lord Jesus Christ; and it was this worship, as well as the Jewish sacrifice, against which the Mahometan arms and Mahometan craft were levelled; and, as I conceive it, this was the daily sacrifice, or the atoning sacrifice, the true worship, which was taken away and annihilated, as it were, by the Arabian prophet and his followers. The daily sacrifice of the Lamb without spot or blemish was the atonement made for the daily sins of the people, and was a type of that great atonement to be offered by the Lamb of God: this sacrificial atonement was literally taken away by the Romans in the destruction of the temple, but had virtually departed from the Jews at the crucifixion of our Lord; and was not taken away from the church of God till that church itself was overthrown by the Mahometan apostacy^e. I feel so convinced of this being the

^d Prideaux, vol. i. p. 231. Bishop Hooper, quoting from Maimonides, observes, "Now the Jews also have their daily prayers in the place of their daily sacrifices." Mr. Faber expresses himself to the same purpose.

^e See Exod. xxix. 38. Numb. xxviii. 3.

true exposition of the daily sacrifice, that I shall not now hesitate to proceed to the next particular, the length of the vision.

The question is, as it is stated in the 13th verse, "How long shall be the vision concerning the daily sacrifice, and the transgression of desolation, to give both the sanctuary and the host to be trodden under foot?" That this question embraces the vision now seen by Daniel from the first rise of Alexander to the end of the apostacy, I think is clear; for the desolation was caused by the little horn, the little horn was produced by the goat; the goat then is part of the vision of desolation, and not the ram, who had nothing to do with the little horn; upon this ground then I date the beginning of the vision of the little horn in the year 335 before Christ^f, when Alexander was appointed general of the Grecians against the Persians: deducting now 335 from 2300, the time of the vision, and we shall be brought to the year of our Lord 1965, when the sanctuary is to be cleansed. I would not presume to affect the prophet, but if I am right in the first date, the consequence must follow, and we shall see presently how exactly these dates correspond with others that will soon fall under our consider-

^f Prideaux's Connection, vol. i. p. 379.

ation. And thus we have the time precisely told us when we shall see the Eastern church returning from her apostacy, and leading in her hand her elder sister the converted daughter of Judah, and together building up a temple to the Lord of hosts, whose foundation is in Christ.

The effect which this dreadful vision had upon the prophet is very striking, for he fainted and was sick certain days; the calamities which he foresaw coming upon his country afflicted and overwhelmed his spirits. The next vision granted him was of a more cheering nature; the advent of their Messias, their Deliverer and Prince. This seems to have been given him in this place, in order to renovate and strengthen his spirits, that he might be the better able to bear the remainder, and be carried on the more easily to the end of the calamities. As this vision forms no material link in the chain which I am pursuing, I do but touch upon it here, and refer my reader to Prideaux and Wintle. We will pass on to the eleventh chapter.

DANIEL. CHAP. XI.

OF THE KING OF GRECIA AND THE WILFUL KING.

IN this eleventh chapter, the angel, resuming the prophet's subject, takes up his line of prophecy, and beginning with the king of Grecia succinctly runs through a train of circumstances till he comes again to the little horn in verse 36, which is there portrayed to the end of the chapter in a manner eminently distinguishing the grand impostor. The circumstances previously foretold in this chapter have been so clearly explained, and so accurately applied to the state of the Jews in their connection with the kings of Syria and Egypt, even so as to have been considered by some as a history written after the event, that I shall not obtrude upon my reader, what has been already so well explained by others, but refer him to Bishop Newton on the place; only observing how briefly the angel has touched upon the influence of the Roman power on the church of God, comprising the whole in five verses, and then reverting to the little horn.

But as the character of the wilful king (as he is called) has been in my apprehension much

misunderstood, I shall pay some attention to it, and endeavour to fix it on that power to which it seems to me to refer.

Bishop Newton has, I think, very clearly shewn us, that the transactions of Antiochus Epiphanes end with the 30th verse, and that the same verse introduces the Romans, to whom he gives the remainder of the prophecy : I cordially agree with him to the end of the 35th verse ; but here I must dissent, because he considers the two little horns to be one and the same, belonging to the Western church only : whereas I conceive them to be different symbols, the one of the Eastern imposture, the other of the Western corruption, forming *together* one grand apostacy, or falling away from the true church of God : I will therefore allow that this wilful king may and does personify the corruptions of the Western church, but it is in unison with the little horn of the east, to whom the most marked characteristics evidently belong.

In the first place let it be observed, that this chapter contains no new vision, but is given by the angel, as himself states, to Daniel, “ to make thee *understand* what shall befall thy people.” What was to befall his people the Prophet had already seen, and therefore to make him *understand*, I presume is so to arrange

his former visions as to bring clearly to the view of his understanding the bearings and connection of their chief points, the bearings and connection of the two little horns. In order to make the arrangement more clear, the angel begins with the contest between Persia and Greece. He tells of the establishment of the Grecian kingdom, and of its division into four parts. He speaks of the contests arising between two of those parts, and continues the history of Syria down to the time of Antiochus Epiphanes; the Romans then follow, who soon after his reign subverted that kingdom, and assumed the predominance over Judea; their destruction of the temple is mentioned, and the state of the church subsequent to this event: immediately after this the angel introduces the wilful king; "And the king shall do according to his will." Being thus brought forward, in this place, so immediately after the Romans, it would seem that this king must arise from the Roman power; so thinks Bishop Newton: and as the description of his character so much resembles the little horn of the goat, the Bishop was induced to take much pains to prove that the little horn of the goat arose in the Roman dominions, and to identify him with the little horn of the beast, and thus he finds the means of applying him entirely to the Western horn, or in other

words to the Papal power. But let it be observed, that this very abrupt introduction also implies the application of him to an object very recently or immediately under the contemplation of the Prophet, and what can this be, but the terrific vision, which he has so lately seen, which had so strong an effect upon him, which the angel was come to make him understand, and to which the whole narrative of the angel runs parallel^a, the vision of the goat? And therefore the wilful king must be the same as the little horn of the goat, which I trust I have already shewn is distinct from the little horn of the beast, and represents the apostacy of Mahomet. Still however the difference between the Bishop and myself is not so wide, but that it may be reconciled, as we both consider the

^a For this there is Bp. Newton's own authority in the following passage: "It is the usual method of the Holy Spirit
 " to make the latter prophecies explanatory of the former;
 " and revelation is 'as the shining light, that shineth more
 " and more unto the perfect day,' Prov. iv. 18. The four
 " great empires of the world which were shewn to Nebu-
 " chadnezzar in the form of a great image, were again more
 " particularly represented to Daniel in the shape of four
 " great wild beasts. In like manner the memorable events
 " which were revealed to Daniel in the vision of the ram
 " and the he goat, are here again more clearly and explicitly
 " revealed in this vision by an angel; so that this latter pro-
 " phecy may not improperly be said to be a comment and
 " explanation of the former."

ultimate object to be the power of Antichrist. He, on the one hand, inducing from the wilful king the identity of the two little horns, fixes them both upon the Papal power; on the other hand I consider the two little horns as two different branches of the same falling away, arising in different parts of the empire, the east and the west, and uniting their characters in that of the wilful king: we agree in the object, though not in the means of coming at that object: nor let this be considered as a light matter, since the one includes Mahomet, and the whole apostacy of the East, the other excludes him, and confines the ^b falling away of St. Paul to the corruptions of the Western church only. But now let us turn our attention to the characteristics and marks of the wilful king, and observe those which are most applicable to the one horn, or the other: and first let us compare the attributes of the two horns, and mark their diversity.

The little horn of the beast is to rise by his *own power amongst the other kings, or in spite of them*, and is to *establish* his dominion by *subduing three of them*: the saints are to be given into his hand for 1260 years; and they are then to take away his dominion, and to consume it

^b 2 Thess. ii.

unto the end. The little horn of the goat is mighty, but *not by his own power*; he arises when the *transgressions are come to the full*, and therefore, though he practises and prospers, he has not dominion over the *saints*; he utterly subverts the daily sacrifice, he annihilates the purity of religion, and therefore has no *saints* amongst his followers; and he is to be broken without hand. The saints take away the dominion from the first horn, and consume it *unto the end*; which implies a space of time for consuming it. As a Protestant I may fairly challenge the denomination of saints as belonging to ourselves in this instance, who took away the dominion from the little horn of the beast at the Reformation, and are still consuming it; but the end is not yet, the horn still survives; he *survives*, but does not *prosper*. The little horn of the goat on the contrary still practises and *prosper*s; but^c he is to be broken without hand: that is, by a sudden and immediate interference of almighty Providence. As the difference is great between the two little horns, the similarity is striking between them both and the wilful king.

The little horn of the goat shall be a king of a fierce countenance, shall be mighty, shall de-

^c Job xxxiv. 20. Lam. iv. 6. Newton, vol. i. p. 244.

stroy wonderfully, and shall prosper and practise; the king in the 11th chapter shall do according to his will, and shall prosper, till the indignation be accomplished. The little horn shall magnify himself in his heart, and shall also stand up against the Prince of princes: the king shall exalt himself, and magnify himself above every god, and shall speak marvellous things against the God of gods; neither shall he regard any god; for he shall magnify himself above all. The little horn shall be broken without hand; against the wilful king, at the time of the end, or immediately before the end, the king of the south shall push, and the king of the north shall come against him like a whirlwind; but they make no impression upon him; he still prospers, for he plants the tabernacles of his palaces between the seas of the glorious holy mountain; human means even at the end do not prevail; but yet he shall come to his end, and none shall help him.

Apply this now to the little horn of the beast and it does not hold, for his power over the saints is broken; they have already taken away his dominion, and are still consuming it. Apply it to the little horn of the goat, and it answers well; this one in a state of Popery is dying away, the other in Mahometanism still prospers; the former is to be consumed, the latter

to prosper to the end. But notwithstanding these discordant parts, there are other characteristics, which seem to apply solely, or at least principally, to the little horn of the beast; such as, "neither shall he regard the God of his fathers, nor the desire of women:" if we are to understand by the God of his fathers, the religious worship of his fathers, this passage is applicable to both; but if by this, as I conceive, is meant the true worship of the true God, it is applicable only to the horn of the beast, as Mahomet was originally an idolater. The desire of women I have somewhere seen interpreted to be the Messiah, or him whom every woman was desirous of bearing; and in this sense only can it be applied to Mahomet: but when I find St. Paul, in speaking of the corruptions of the latter days, enumerating amongst others, "forbidding to marry," I cannot help interpreting the one passage by the other, and consequently applying it directly to the Papal chair. The 38th and 39th verses may be applied indifferently to either, or both, though I think, that "dividing the land for gain" has a special reference to penances, pardons, and indulgences, which were so liberally distributed for sale to certain men and particular districts under the domination of the Romish church. Thus the two horns are united in the description of Anti-

christ, and in his end ; for the end of them all is destruction. That great end, when " Michael
 " shall stand up, the great prince which stand-
 " eth for the children of thy people: and there
 " shall be a time of trouble, such as never was
 " since there was a nation even to that same
 " time : and at that time thy people shall be
 " delivered, every one that shall be found writ-
 " ten in the book. And many of them that
 " sleep in the dust of the earth shall awake,
 " some to everlasting life, and some to shame
 " and everlasting contempt. And they that be
 " wise shall shine as the brightness of the fir-
 " mament ; and they that turn many to righte-
 " ousness as the stars for ever and ever."

This is the grand consummation of all things, when our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ shall appear in his second advent. Whether he is then to establish the kingdom of his Gospel over the whole world in a happy millenium, or to execute final judgment, I shall not now enquire^d; but it is to be a time of great trouble when the grand deliverance is to be wrought.

^d I wish to have it understood, that whenever I make use of the terms, the last consummation, the second advent, the cleansing of the sanctuary, the blessed time, and phrases of the like import, I do not mean to attach any other sense to them, than the state of the Church immediately subsequent to its state militant. This state subsequent has had various

And when shall this great deliverance be effected? when shall the sanctuary be cleansed? We may surely ask this question without presumption, as it has already been asked in the visions of Daniel, and an answer graciously vouchsafed.

“How long shall it be to the end of these ‘wonders’?” is the first question; by which I understand the prosperity of the little horn of the goat; for let it be kept in remembrance, that it is the vision of the goat which has still the possession of the Prophet’s mind, and lies expanded to his view: how long are these wonders or the *calamities of this vision* to last? And the answer is given, as we shall now see, in reference to a former period, the length of the vision of the he goat; which was 2300 years: “for a time, times, and an half,” is the answer; that is, three prophetic years and an half, and these are 1260 prophetic days; i. e. 1260 years. “What shall be the end of these things?” is the second question; “from the time that the daily

representations by various commentators, and imagination has had its full play. I may also have my shadowy opinion; but a discussion here would be on things which never may, and probably never will be understood, till the event itself has taken place.

* Dan. xii. 6.

† Ibid. ver. 8.

“sacrifice shall be taken away, and the abomination that maketh desolate set up, there shall be a thousand two hundred and ninety days,” is the answer. Here thirty years are added to the former era for the decline of the prosperity, and the taking away of the abomination of desolation. And it is further said, “Blessed is he that waiteth, and cometh to the thousand three hundred and five and thirty days;” i. e. years, when I conceive the sanctuary is to be thoroughly cleansed and purified. Thirty years, I presume, will not be considered too long a time for the overthrow of Antichrist, nor forty-five years more for reducing the church, and particularly the Jews, under the pure standard of Christ. Let us now see how these periods will agree with former dates. I have already shewn, that the daily sacrifice was taken away by Mahomet in the year 630^s; add to this 1260, the era of prosperity of the little horn, and we have the year 1890 for the beginning of the fall of the Arabian apostacy; add thirty years more for its completion, and we gain the year 1920; forty-five years more for cleansing the sanctuary will bring us to the year 1965^b, when, as I before shewed, the vision of the he goat was to end, and the sanctuary to be cleansed.

^f See p. 44, 63.

^b See p. 47.

It is with fear and trembling that I dare to fix upon a future period ; but my argument necessarily leads me to it. Let me then briefly restate the argument, and examine every step ; if an error appears, I will recall it ; if a difficulty, I will endeavour to solve it. A power we are told is to arise, who shall establish a chain of influence over the church of God for 2300 years ; this power is symbolized by a he goat, which goat we are informed by the angel is the king of Grecia : the goat exactly symbolizes Alexander ; and Alexander was made captain of the Grecian army against Persia in the year 335 before Christ ; the influence then is to end, or, in the words of Scripture, the sanctuary shall be cleansed, in the year of our Lord 1965. We are likewise told, that another power shall arise in the same chain of influence, who is to perform a notable exploit, by taking away the daily sacrifice ; and that he shall continue his influence in prosperity through an era of 1260 years from this exploit, and thirty years more in decline ; and that forty-five years more are to be added to produce a time of blessedness, making altogether an era of 1335. Now if the blessed time and the cleansing of the sanctuary be one and the same thing, as I will presently endeavour to shew that they are, we have only to make out the difference of time between the

rise of the two powers to find who the second is, and what is meant by the daily sacrifice. The difference between the two periods of 2300 and 1335 is 965; deducting from that the 335 years before Christ, and we have the year 630 after Christ. The power who then arose was Mahomet, who established his dominion by the capture of Mecca in that year, and performed his exploit by overturning the church of God, and planting Mahometanism on its ruins.

I am aware that two steps in this argument are assailable; the one in regard to the period of 2300 years, and the other, the daily sacrifice. As to the first, I will state the objection in Bishop Newton's words^b: "for the Seventy," says he, "have four hundred in this place; and others, "as Jerome informs us, read two hundred." Who the *others* mentioned by Jerome are does not appear, and they cannot therefore have much weight: and the Septuagint, according to Dr. Grayⁱ, is particularly defective in chronological accounts. In a note he says, "In the 5th and "11th chapters of Genesis every Patriarch is "said to have lived one hundred years longer "according to the Septuagint than in the Hebrew, except Jared and Methusalem." It is remarkable that exactly one hundred years

^b Newton's Diss. vol. i. p. 331. ⁱ Gray's Key, p. 21.

should be added to each of the Patriarchs, excepting two only ; whatever the error may be, we may fairly conclude, that the addition of one hundred years to the 2300 is an error also : and when we consider the diligence and care with which our common translation was made by our best divines, we may join with Dr. Gray in saying, that " certainly it is a most wonderful " and incomparable work, equally remarkable " for the general fidelity of its construction and " the magnificent simplicity of its language : " and I cannot hesitate to assume the numbers adopted by them to be assuredly the very truest and best.

In regard to the daily sacrifice it may be urged, that it is a matter of opinion only. I will not repeat what I have already said ; because bare repetitions will not prove a point, and it will remain but an opinion still ; but I think, that if what I have stated concerning the 2300 years of the vision of the he goat be accurate, this of itself will prove the correctness of my opinion. For if the era of the 2300 years begins in the year 335 before Christ, the cleansing of the sanctuary ends in the year 1965 after Christ. This blessed time is to arrive 1335 years after the taking away of the daily sacrifice, which therefore must take place in the year 630. Now no event can be found in history so con-

sonant to our ideas of taking away a sacrifice, as the total destruction of God's church in a very large portion of the world, which comprehends within its embrace the particular and holy land of Palestine, and raising in its place a vile and idolatrous imposture. This event we find did take place, as an immediate consequence of the establishment of the Mahometan power at Mecca in the year 630; and it is here therefore that we must look for the taking away of the daily sacrifice meant by the Prophet.

I have now only to shew that the cleansing of the sanctuary and the blessed time are one and the same thing. I should think that this would be easily conceded; but as it is a matter of much moment, and may be proved, I shall do it in a few words. In the 8th chapter, 19th verse, it is said, alluding to the cleansing of the sanctuary at the fulfilment of the 2300 years, "I will make thee know what shall be in the last *end* of the indignation: for at the time appointed the *end* shall be." And in the 12th chapter, verses 12, 13, it is said, "Blessed is he that waiteth, and cometh to the thousand three hundred and five and thirty days. But go thy way till the *end* be: for thou shalt rest, and stand in thy lot at the *end* of the

“days.” The sanctuary then is to be cleansed at the end, and the blessed time also is at the end. These two events synchronize, which was the point to be proved.

CONCLUSION.

FROM the preceding observations I think we may fairly draw the following conclusions.

In the exposition which has been given of Nebuchadnezzar's dream, I have advanced this most important point, That the ten toes signify the reign of the last ten *Pagan* emperors of Rome: that in their days the stone hewn out of the rock without hands, smote the image on its feet, and broke it to pieces; or, in other words, the kingdom of Jesus Christ was raised up by God, which destroyed the Pagan kingdoms of Satan, either generally by the preaching of the Gospel, or particularly by the conversion of the Roman empire.

Secondly, we learn more distinctly the nature and the character of the four kingdoms, the exact time of existence of the three first, and the precise meaning of the sea, the earth, and a prophetic beast: the kingdoms were idolatrous, tyrannical, and overbearing, not only upon their own, but the chosen people; their power *arose* not only *from* the sea but the *earth*; their government extended not only over the Gentile nations but over the Church of God: thus forming that ecclesiastico-political

power which we must look for in a prophetical beast ; and the existence of the three first as beasts we find to be exactly 720 years.

Thirdly, we have the portrait of the Roman beast ; we see the general diversity of religious worship from each other in the four beasts, and we see the particular diversity of the fourth in his conversion to Christianity. We find the ten horns of this beast parallel with the ten toes of the image, and consequently representing the ten last *Pagan* emperors ; and we become acquainted with the little horn, though we have not yet decided the character whom it represents. The prophet having thus pointed out to us the western road, and given us the period of the horns' power over the saints in the western church, leaves the further concerns of this church to a future prophet, and turns to the point where the eastern road branches off, to conduct us by that road to the consummation in the church of the east.

Fourthly, he directs our view back to the second and third beasts, and shews us that the length of this road is to be measured from the time of their contention, and he gives us the sum of the measure : he informs us, under the emblem of another little horn, of the rise of another power, who will afflict, and destroy the church of the east, who will practise and pro-

sper to the end. In this little horn we cannot but see the apostacy of Mahomet, and in the taking away of the daily sacrifice, the subversion of Christianity.

In the fifth place this subject is renewed, and the Prophet, after conducting us through a variety of circumstances bearing upon the Jewish church from the time of Alexander, at last brings us through the Romans to the wilful king, whom I have shewn to be the representative of Mahomet, or the Arabian apostacy; and though differing in some respects, yet uniting in his person the little horn of the Roman beast. His period is also measured, and I have given both the time of his beginning and end. Thus have the events of the eastern church been brought to a consummation by the prophet Daniel: and for those of the western church we must look to the apostle St. John, who has transmitted to us his Revelations, some of which I shall now make it my business to consider.

PART II.
ON PART OF THE BOOK OF THE REVELATION
OF ST. JOHN.

REVELATION. CHAP. VI.
ON THE FOUR FIRST SEALS.

HAVING given an explanation of Daniel's visions, concerning God's church, which chiefly and more particularly bear upon the Jewish dispensation, up to its connection with Christianity in the eastern branch, I shall now turn my attention to the western, and endeavour to shew from the Apocalypse of St. John the state of the same church under the Christian dispensation.

Daniel, we may remember, gave us a description of four beasts; having done that, he entirely drops the fourth, and takes up his parable from the third. This fourth beast is allowed to be the Roman. I have shewn him to be Pagan as well as Roman; marked by his ten horns answering to the toes of the image, those kings in whose days the kingdom of the stone should arise into power. This kingdom of the stone is what St. John here describes.

The three first chapters of the Apocalypse do not seem to have any direct connection with

Daniel's vision, or to affect the church in general; they therefore do not enter into my design, and I shall refer my reader for an explanation of them, to Bishop Newton and Dean Woodhouse.

The connection between the visions of Daniel and the Apocalypse, takes place in the days of the kings during the existence of the Pagan Roman beast, when the first seal was opened. In this the apostle saw the kingdom of the stone arising in its purity; in the second he saw corruption and persecution in the church rising to a head; in the third he observed deep corruption and depression under tyrannical power; and in the fourth was portrayed the total corruption of Christ's church; the fifth shewed him the saints who had suffered martyrdom; and in the sixth the stone arose into a mountain. Thus six seals give us in a short sketch the whole state of Christ's church militant here on earth. Let us now attend to the opening of their seals: for a full explanation I shall refer my reader to Dean Woodhouse, only making use of his excellent notes so far as may set in a clear light my own apprehension of the subject.

The first seal opens and discovers a white horse, with a rider armed with a bow, and a crown upon his head, going forth conquering and to conquer.

Whiteness is purity; "Though your sins

“ be as scarlet they shall be white as snow ;”
 the ^b horse is a spirit ; the ^c bow an emblem of
 strength ; and the ^d crown, of royalty and priest-
 hood. Who then is this rider in purity of spirit,
 armed with strength, and crowned with regal
 priesthood ? Let the Psalmist answer ^e, “ Gird
 “ thy sword upon thy thigh, O most mighty, with
 “ thy glory and thy majesty. And in thy ma-
 “ jesty ride prosperously, because of truth
 “ and meekness and righteousness ; and thy
 “ right hand shall teach thee terrible things.
 “ Thine arrows are sharp in the heart of the
 “ king’s enemies ; whereby the people fall un-
 “ der thee. Thy throne, O God, is for ever and
 “ ever : the sceptre of thy kingdom is a right
 “ sceptre.” This seal then is the primitive state
 of Christianity. And the rider himself is our
 Priest and King.

In reverting to the notes of Dr. Woodhouse,
 I perceive that I have not exactly coincided
 with his ideas, but the difference between us is
 so small, that I think it is of no consequence ;
 we both come to the same conclusion, that this
 first seal represents the preaching of pure, true,
 and primitive Christianity.

It may be observed here, that we do not see
 the sword girded upon this warrior’s thigh, but

^a Isaiah i. 18. ^b Zech. vi. 5. ^c Gen. xlix. 24. Job xxix.
 20. Jer. xlix. 35. Hos. i. 5. ^d Exod. xxix. 6. ^e Psal. xlv. 3.

we see it afterwards, issuing from his mouth when he returns upon his white horse conquering and having conquered^f; neither do we see his arrows, but they are to be inferred, as the bow is useless without them; and this weapon is beautifully emblematical of God's merciful method of promoting the religion of the Messiah^g.

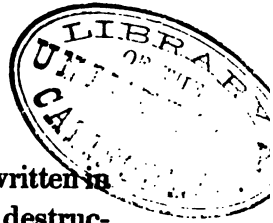
I must not dismiss this seal without making a few observations upon Bishop Newton's interpretation. He seems to be particularly anxious to do away a notion, which, he says, "some have been *obliged* to take up, in order to support a former supposition, that this first seal exhibits a representation of the person and dignity of Christ, and of the triumphs of the Christian religion over the powers of paganism. And," says he, "at the same time they *allow* (as is generally allowed) that the six first seals especially relate to heathen Rome, and comprehend so many notable periods of the Roman history." A very strange allowance I must confess, and the ar-

^f Rev. xix. 15.

^g See Bp. Horsley, Sermon vii. "Now both these weapons, both the sword and the arrow, are emblems of one and the same thing; which is no other than the word of God, in its different effects and different manners of operation on the minds of men, represented under these two different images." Vol. i. p. 125.

gument is strongly put ; for he thus concludes it. “ But where then is the propriety or consistence of understanding this first seal of Christ and the Christian religion, and the succeeding seals of the successive revolutions in the Roman empire, during its pagan and unconverted state ? ” Certainly none, and the inconsistency is striking : but I cannot agree with the Bishop in the inference which he draws from these premises ; on the contrary, it appears to me that the interpretation which they give is right, and the allowance which they make is wrong ; and for this good reason, because the object throughout these prophecies, in the contemplation of the prophet, is the church of God. This point I must ever insist upon, as this alone is an object of sufficient dignity to call forth the immediate interference of divine wisdom. The redemption and salvation of mankind was the only thing worthy to bring down from the glory of his Father the Son of the eternal God ; and the affairs of his church, which he planted in his own blood, are the things most worthy of the inspiration of his Holy Spirit. For a further illustration of this material point, I will refer my reader to Dean Woodhouse in his Introduction, p. 11, 12, 13, 14.

But another observation arises from this same argument, as stated by Newton. He says, “ They



“ who suppose this book to have been written in Domitian’s time, some years after the destruction of Jerusalem, are *obliged* to give another explanation of this first seal, applicable to some subsequent event, that it may not be deemed a history of things past, instead of a prophecy of things to come.” Now whether these commentators were actuated by such motives, and whether such motives produced this result, it is no matter, for it is plain that the Bishop conceived that they were, and that he thought such result *necessary*. Now it is true, one obvious and commonly received meaning of the word prophecy is the foretelling of a thing that is to come, and that one cannot be said to foretel a thing that is past; but prophecy is not always used strictly in this sense; and although by far the greater number of the prophecies are prospective, some may be, and certainly are in part, often retrospective, more particularly when the events are laid open to the Prophet’s eye in the form of a vision or dream. In this instance, a vision is laid before the Prophet’s eye, containing the history of the Christian Church; can it be said that this history is mutilated, because the things seen had begun to take place? And that at a time too when it was in its very first beginning, at its very outset? For this prophecy was seen by St. John, who was himself one of

its first promulgators, so that he scarcely goes back one step for its rise. It was at this very time in its first progress ; it is therefore well represented by the white horse and his rider, going forth *conquering* and *to conquer* ; he was now in the act of conquering ; it is an event now passing before the Prophet's eyes in reality, as well as in vision. Similar to this is Daniel's vision of Nebuchadnezzar's image ; he saw the head of gold, the emblem of Babylonian tyranny, which was at the time passing before him, for " thou, O " King," says he, " art this head of gold." No one ever conceived that the head of gold did not represent the Babylonian empire, because Daniel did not *foretel* it, neither then let it be understood, that the white horse does not represent Christianity, because it may seem to be retrospective ; there is no more necessity, in order to make this good, that St. John must have prophesied before the birth of our Saviour, than there is to make Daniel's good, that his vision should have been seen prior to the Babylonian captivity.

I must notice one argument more of the Bishop's, drawn from the four living creatures or beasts described in the 7th verse of the 4th chapter. This argument is ingenious, but not sound ; captivating, though not convincing ; and on this ground I think it necessary to bring it under

consideration. The four living creatures are stated by Mede to signify the four standards of the Israelitish camp^b; to support which hypothesis, he has nothing but an uncertain Jewish tradition. Newton applies each beast to his peculiar standard, the lion to Judah, the calf to Ephraim, the man to Reuben, the eagle to Dan; but of this he offers no proof or authority. Judah indeed is called a lion's whelp, by his father, a lion, and an old lionⁱ; and in this very book it is said, "Behold the lion of the tribe of Judah^k." Here then at least there are grounds for such an application; and as I wish to give the Bishop full latitude and strength of his argument, I will concede that the other symbols may be also applied to their respective standards. Now we know from the book of Numbers^l that Judah's standard was placed in the east, Reuben's in the south, Ephraim's in the west, and Dan's in the north; consequently, the lion represents the east, the man the south, the calf the west, and the eagle the north, in the compass of the heavens. From these positions the Bishop aims at drawing this conclusion: "When the first seal is opened, one of the four beasts, which appears to be the lion of Judah, says,

^b Vid. Woodhouse, p. 111. ⁱ Gen. xlix. 9. ^k Chap. v. 5.

^l Chap. ii.

“Come and see; and, behold, a white horse!”
 “Now,” says the Bishop, “this first period com-
 menceth with Vespasian and Titus, who from
 commanding in the east, were advanced to the
 empire;” and he says again, after speaking of
 the other emperors, “What other emperor before
 them, besides Vespasian, came from the east,
 which was the station of the lion, who made
 the first proclamation?” Now if it were the
 lion that made this proclamation, and it be ne-
 cessary that the personage proclaimed should
 come out of the east, because the proclamation
 was made from the standard of the east, why then
 surely a greater than Vespasian is here. Let my
 reader turn his mind to that star which Balaam
 saw arising out of Jacob; that bright and morning
 star of St. John; that star in the east, which
 brought the wise men to worship at their Sa-
 viour’s feet. I must upon the whole therefore
 entirely coincide with the excellent and learned
 Mr. Mede, and his followers, that this seal ex-
 hibits a representation of the person and dig-
 nity of Christ, and of the triumphs of the
 Christian religion over the powers of paganism.

“^m And when he had opened the second seal,
 I heard the second beast say, Come and see.
 And there went out another horse, *that was*

^m Ver. 3.

“red: and *power* was given to him that sat thereon to take peace from the earth, and that they should kill one another: and there was given unto him a great sword^a.” A red horse—a spirit degenerate and sinful, fiery and hot, a persecuting zeal. The rider has power given him to disturb the peace of the church, persecutions arise in the church; a great sword is given him, the emblem of power and destruction; of conversion by force, it is great and oppressive. This seal then portrays the time of tyranny, degeneracy, and persecution in the church, when ecclesiastical authority was united to the imperial power, which supported and enforced its corrupt doctrines and oppressive decrees: when persecution to death took place amongst Christians; when they should kill one another.

This may serve as a general character of the red horse and his rider, but there are some particulars worthy of a more minute observation; “and *power* was given to him that sat thereon, to take peace from the earth, and that they should kill one another: and there was given unto him a great sword.” These things thus told clearly imply a gradation in degeneracy; disputes and contentions first arise in the

^a Isaiah i. 18. Woodhouse, p. 136.

church, for peace is to be taken from the earth; persecutions follow, for "they should kill" (or rather sacrifice) "one another;" and then they gain the power of the sword, "and there was "given unto him a great sword." From the nature of corruption it is perhaps impossible to detect its first rise; but if we can mark a period in the early church when the first step of this gradation clearly appeared, we may from thence pursue the progress of degeneracy to the second and third. The judicious writer, Woodhouse, has furnished such a period towards the close of the second century; and it is an instance directly to the purpose. About this time there arose a furious dispute between Victor, first bishop of Rome, and the Asiatic churches, concerning the celebration of Easter. The Bishop would have sacrificed these churches to his resentment by excommunication, (i. e. cut them off, or separated them from his own church, vid. Vidal's *Mosh.* vol. ii. p. 385,) had not Irenæus and the western Bishops stood in the gap to appease his anger, and check his intolerant spirit. From this instance it appears, that disputes and contentions had at that time entered the church, that peace was taken from the earth. It also appears, that at this time persecution endeavoured to raise her head, but was not able; she had not yet sufficient strength, she had not yet the pub-

lic voice. Not so in the year 270, when the Bishops assembled at Antioch, and expelled Paul of Samosata from the jurisdiction of that see; we then see Christians sacrificing^o one another: but the sword was not yet given; that power was not attained till Constantine arose to the sole imperial dignity, as head of the Christian church, A. D. 325. And we may further remark, that the horse with his rider did not at

^o It is remarkable, that when the red horse appears, peace is taken from the church, and that they, that is, Christians, *οφείλουσι* should kill or sacrifice one another, persecute, perhaps to death, but not by the sword of power, for the *μάχαιρα μεγάλη* seems to have been given afterwards. And the locusts, which I have placed in the same period, had the power *ὅτι ἀποκτείνουσιν* not to destroy, but only to torment, or poison, or corrupt, till the time should come that they should change their appearance, as in the 7th verse, when, as I conceive, the great sword was given to the rider of the red horse.

St. Paul, quoting from the Psalms, in the 8th chap. 36th verse of his Epistle to the Romans, says, "As it is written, "For thy sake are we killed all the day long, *θανατοῦμεθα*; we "are accounted as sheep for the slaughter, *οφθυῖς*." In the case of the disciples, they were destroyed by the hand of power, or the great sword; the sheep were slaughtered by the sacrificial knife. It may perhaps be objected, that so the man be dead, it matters not whether his head be struck off with a sword or his throat cut with a knife. This I grant; but the difference lies in the character which is given to the transaction; the one is a mark of civil or martial power, the other of a hot and misguided zeal: the first of these, as it appears to me from the Greek, was denied to the Christians, as well as to the locusts, in the first onset, but afterwards given: and thus there will be no discrepancy in the times of each.

his first onset appear with the sword, but the sword was given him in his progress ; just so the corruptions of the church proceeded at first without power, but obtained that power under the auspices of their imperial head.

After what has been said of Bishop Newton's principle in applying these symbols to Roman state affairs, it would be idle to enter further into a discussion and refutation of his interpretation ; but it is curious to observe, how he attempts to make them bear upon the Christian church, as if he had a feeling of consciousness that he was advancing in a wrong road. He winds up a long string of wars and tumults, of massacres and murders, between the Jews and the Romans, and counts them as so many glorious triumphs to the professors of Christianity, the disciples of the meek Jesus.

I shall now dismiss this seal, in full assurance that I may assume the rider to be, as I shall hereafter make it more fully appear, the little horn of Daniel's fourth beast, the first seven-headed ten-horned beast of St. John.

The third seal opens and discovers a black horse, and he that sat on him having a yoke or balance in his hand. A dark, gloomy, superstitious spirit of ignorance ; bearing, if a yoke, the emblem of slavery ; if the balance, of rigid parsimony as illustrated by the following words :

"A measure of wheat for a penny, and three
 "measures of barley for a penny^p." I shall
 here ask with Dean Woodhouse, "By these pro-
 "visions for food, what are we to understand?
 "Wheat, barley, wine, oil, in their plain and
 "proper meaning? Surely not. The tenour of
 "prophetic language forbids, directing our at-
 "tention, as our Lord has directed it, to an-
 "other kind of scarcity, even that of which the
 "prophet Amos speaks; 'Not a famine of
 "bread, nor a thirst of water, but of hearing the
 "words of the Lord^q.' 'I am the bread of life,
 "saith the Lord; he that cometh to me shall
 "never hunger, and he that believeth in me shall
 "never thirst^r.' 'Man shall not live by bread
 "alone, but by every word that proceedeth out
 "of the mouth of God^s.'" What then do we
 learn from this symbol? but that there should
 be a time of dark ignorance, when the pure
 and saving truths of the Gospel were to be had
 indeed, but in the greatest scarcity, and at a
 high price; this is figured by the measure of
 wheat for a penny: the less essential and
 more common and corrupted doctrines, figured
 by the barley, were to be had more plentifully,
 and at a cheaper rate: but the wine and oil,

^p Ver. 6.

^q Vid. Woodhouse, p. 143.

^r Amos viii. 11.

^s John vi. 35.

^t Matt. iv. 4.

the more precious commodities of life, viz. the Scriptures themselves, were scarcely to be had at all, not even weighed, or measured out at any price ; but nevertheless, they were to remain uninjured, uncorrupted. The black horse then portrays that gloomy night of the dark ages, when ignorance and superstition starved the spiritual life of man, and depressed him under their fearful yoke. For the rider of this horse we shall be at no loss, when we come to consider the two horned beast of the Apocalypse.

But here let it be observed, that I have considered the symbol in the hand of the rider, in either sense of a balance, or a yoke, or both ; that it may mean a balance, I think is evident, from the words which immediately follow, denoting measure, and price ; but that the original meaning of the Greek word is a yoke, there can be no doubt, and I will refer my reader to Dean Woodhouse's excellent criticism on this place. Bishop Newton has adopted the balance ; he could do no otherwise to make it applicable to his interpretation, an interpretation so extraordinary as to stand in much need of this plausible construction. The Bishop, speaking of Septimius Severus, who began, and Alexander Severus, who closed the period to which the interpretation is applied by him, says,

“ The colour of the black horse befits the severity of their nature, and their name.” Whatever connection there may be between blackness and severity, let it be remembered, that in the time between these two emperors, we have to reckon four others, men of very different characters, viz. Caracalla, Geta, Macrinus, and Helio-gabulus; two of these, men of no great note; the other two, monsters in wickedness as great as ever stained the imperial throne: and Alexander Severus, the last of this period, so far from participating in the stern character of his namesake, had, as Mr. Gibbon informs us, “ a natural mildness and moderation of temper, which preserved him from the assaults of passion, and the allurements of vice:” however then the black horse with the balances may befit the severity and justice of Septimius, neither can the balances be applied to his four immediate successors, nor the blackness of severity to Alexander Severus.

The fourth seal opens, “ and behold a pale horse: and his name that sat on him was Death, and Hell followed with him. And power was given unto them over the fourth part of the earth, to kill with the sword, and with hunger, and with death, and with the beasts of the earth.” A horse pale, livid, gangrened; a spirit of fear, a total decay, bearing a

dead faith, a living death, the worm that dieth not, and the fire which is not quenched. And power was given unto them to pervade the universal church with oppression, with a want of spiritual food, with lifeless faith, and ravening wolves in sheep's clothing. If we can point out a time when these miseries began to appear, nay if we do know a time, when these miseries do appear, though perhaps they are not yet arrived at their utmost pitch, (for the blasphemous beast has not risen yet to his highest power,) we shall be able to mark the era poisoned by the influence of this baneful horse.

Excellent as is Dean Woodhouse's note upon this place, I think he has here made some confusion ; arising from what I conceive to be a misapplication of the prophecy. He considers both the black horse and the pale to represent the Papacy: the former in its first stages, and the latter under its deeper corruption. But in explaining the fourth part of the earth in ver. 8. he says, " It may perhaps be found, that the " countries which underwent the rage of this " seal, bore this proportion to the rest of the " inhabited, or at least Christian world." He goes on to say, " but the slaughter and devastation (which is to be explained under the " ensuing note) reached only to certain parts." The ensuing note is upon the fifth seal, which

gives an account of the saints and martyrs, those who suffered as witnesses of the truth, and, amongst others, those who suffered under the persecution of the See of Rome, for the profession of a purer Christianity than was taught or allowed by that See: those countries then which produced the greater number of martyrs, were of course the most enlightened in the truth; but these are the countries to which the Dean alludes as under the influential power of the pale horse. Now let us examine the weapons of this horse. First, the sword: it is granted, they fell under the sword. Second, hunger: here we must pause; food in this place is, I presume, with the Dean's explanation by my side, spiritual food; hunger then is spiritual hunger; hunger arises from the privation of food, but these men abounded; they were not starved for want, but were cut off by the sword, because they too much abounded. The pale horse then does not seem to have exerted his power particularly over these countries; I must therefore for this reason amongst others deny that he has any reference to the Papal persecution, and shall without hesitation assign him to be the horse of Infidelity, who began his career upon the decline of the black horse of Papacy.

In regard to his power extending over a

fourth part of the earth, it is an event yet to take place, and therefore cannot be explained ; but I shall have occasion to say something more upon this subject, when I come to the fourth trumpet.

It is particularly necessary to be explicit and clear in these first steps, for unless we be so, it will be impossible to fix the number and variety of incidents which follow in their proper places. I agree with the Dean, that the influence of each separate horse extends so much into that of the next following, that it is difficult to define the beginnings and endings of the separate powers of each ; but nevertheless, periods may be marked, where the power of each is most predominant ; for instance, the white horse is in power from the first rise of Christianity to the year 175^u ; from that period the red horse is gaining influence, increases, and continues in power till the subversion of the Roman empire ; the black horse after this arises, and extends his power to the Reformation ; the pale horse then succeeds, and continues his paralyzing influence, I fear, to the second Advent. To these four periods, and to the circumstances of these periods, we shall find the first four trumpets directly apply. The step which I have deviated

^u The reason for the date 175 will appear hereafter.

from Dean Woodhouse seems to be but small; deeply as I lament to dissent from that excellent and learned commentator, necessity compels me; and though the difference in this place may seem to be but small, it leads to important consequences, and will separate us in our progress far and wide from each other.

As I have nothing new to offer on the fifth and sixth seals, I shall not repeat what has been already so well said by the Dean, but refer my reader at once to him, only observing, that the former describes the saints and martyrs who suffered under the corruptions and persecutions of the church, and the latter brings us to the great day of our Lord.

REVELATION. CHAP. VIII.

ON THE FOUR FIRST TRUMPETS.

THE history of the Christian church being thus sketched out by the first six seals, the seventh opens and introduces the seven angels with their trumpets ; the first four of which have an evident reference to the first four seals, and being applied to them will throw a clearer light upon the transactions which took place in those particular eras. But let it be observed, that when the seventh seal opens, “there was silence “in heaven about the space of half an hour :” a pause or period, indicating that the preceding series of prophecies are come to an end, and that a new series is about to commence, of circumstances applicable to the same portion of time ; as the era between the two advents is the only field appropriated by the Apocalyptic prophecies.

After this solemn silence in heaven the seven angels appear, to whom are given seven trumpets. But before they sound, “another angel “came and stood at the altar, having a golden “censer ; and there was given unto him much “incense, that he should offer *it* with the prayers “of the saints upon the golden altar which was

“ before the throne. And the smoke of the incense which came with the prayers of the saints ascended up before God out of the angel’s hand. And the angel took the censer, and filled it with fire of the altar, and cast it into the earth: and there were voices, and thunderings, and lightnings, and an earthquake.”

This transaction seems to me to be a solemn preparation for what is to follow, and indeed an epitome of the circumstances to be developed by the ensuing trumpets. I am perfectly well satisfied with Dean Woodhouse’s note upon this subject, and entirely agree with him, that the incense here offered by the angel with the prayers of the saints represents the pure worship of the primitive church; and that his casting the fire to the earth, after the offering of the pure incense was finished, represents the introduction into the church of intemperate zeal, heresies, contentions, persecution, and corruption. “ Thus,” says this able commentator, “ in the representation before us, the Christian religion begins in peace, and pure incense rendered effectual by the Saviour’s atonement, and accompanying the devout prayers of the church, is offered for a time; till mingling with earthly corruption, with human passions and prejudices, it becomes the instrument of discord

“ and violence.” I wish I could have had the authority of this enlightened mind in what I am now about to propose: I am apprehensive lest I should be thought to have given too much scope to a fanciful imagination, and it is with much diffidence that I submit the results of my own reflexions in what follows.

I do not find that voices, and thunderings, and lightnings, and earthquakes, are considered by commentators in general in any other light than as indicative of the awful majesty and wrath of God; but from the peculiar manner in which they are introduced, and the particular places in which they are introduced, together with a meaning evidently attached to the seven thunders in the 10th chapter, (though that meaning is ordered to be sealed up, and not explained,) I cannot but be persuaded, that the voices, and thunderings, and lightnings, and earthquakes, have their peculiar meanings adapted to the places in which they stand. I will therefore venture to propose the following exposition, which, should it be deemed fanciful and imaginary, will lead to no violent results. Voices may be either of good or evil tendency, according to the occasion on which they are uttered; if the former, they may be praise, thanksgiving, and glory to God; if the latter, they may be contentions and divisions, false worship and

blasphemy ; the thunderings and lightnings also may either announce the awful majesty of God, or the overwhelming, stunning, and severe tyranny of an idolatrous power. Earthquakes may be literal, if applied to the terraqueous globe, or metaphorical, if applied to the church. In chapter iv. 5, lightnings, and thunderings, and voices, proceed from the throne of God ; here I presume they are of the first description, and, be it remarked, that they are not here accompanied with earthquakes. In the passage before us, chap. viii. 5, voices, and thunderings, and lightnings, and an earthquake, proceed from the fire cast upon the earth ; this last symbol has been explained to mean the contentions and divisions, the feuds and disputes, the persecutions, corruptions, and false doctrines, introduced into the church : the symbols are here then of evil tendency, and the voices, I think, will aptly represent the corruptions and contentions of the church under the influence of the red horse ; the thunderings and lightnings, the tyranny of the black horse ; and the earthquake, the danger of the church through the infidel attacks of the pale horse.

One thing more may be remarked, the particular places in which these symbols stand : they are mentioned four times in the Apocalypse ; the first, chap. iv. 5, immediately before

the appearance of the white horse, proceeding from the throne of God, and therefore good : the second, chap. viii. 5, at the very beginning of the career of the red horse, proceeding from fire cast upon the earth, and therefore evil : the third, chap. xi. 19, at the end of the reign of the black horse, and accompanied with hail, and therefore evil : and the fourth, chap. xvi. 18, at the destruction of the pale horse, in consequence of the vial of wrath, and therefore evil : thus distinguishing and uniting the different influences of the several horses.

After this solemn preparation and prologue, as it were, to the subsequent visions, the first trumpet sounds, “ and there followed hail, and “ fire mingled with blood, and they were cast “ upon the earth :” storms of severe and bitter persecutions, even unto death, that should befall the church of God. As the primitive church did suffer dreadful persecutions, this trumpet is clearly, though not exclusively, connected with the first seal. Upon the sounding of the second trumpet, a great mountain burning with fire is cast into the sea ; that is, a great power placed over the Gentile world burning with zeal for a corrupted religion, (for his is the uncertain and glaring light of fire, not the steady brightness of the sunbeam,) bringing desolation, falsehood, and confusion into the true Christian church. This

trumpet is undoubtedly connected with the second seal, portraying a red and fiery horse with his warlike rider^a. The third trumpet sounds, and behold a great star falling from heaven, burning as it were a lamp, and it fell upon the rivers and fountains : a great star falling from heaven, a minister of religion fallen from the truth glimmering like a lamp, with a faint shew of religion, poisoning the very sources and springs of religious truth, and casting over them the thickest veils of error and superstition. This trumpet then assuredly refers us to the reign of the black horse, whose rider carries in his hand the emblem of slavery, superstition, and parsimony of the bread of life. When the fourth angel sounds, the sun himself is smitten, the moon, and the stars ; the light of the Gospel is withdrawn, men are left under the dominion of the pale horse, whose rider is Death, and whose attendant is Hell. And here I wish to observe, that under the red horse and second trumpet, men had a light, though that light was false and glaring ; under the black horse and third trumpet also they had a light, a dim and faint unsteady light indeed, yet not unconnected with the grace of God ; but under this pale horse of horror the sun himself is smitten ; that is, when

^a And the voices that roar like the sea, *Jer. vi. 23.*

the light of the Gospel is either withdrawn by God, or rejected by men against their own souls, they have no guide but their own perverse will, no light but from their own debased and degenerate reason, thus absorbed in this spiritual death; scepticism, infidelity, and atheism assume the reins, and conduct them directly to the gates of hell.

In this direct application of the four first trumpets to the four first seals or horses respectively, I have again departed more widely from Dean Woodhouse. He seems to think, that though the trumpets are necessarily successive in their description, yet that they are simultaneously sounded, and that their general effects may be applied to any part of the period contained under the four seals, though he seems to me to have confined them chiefly to the two first: he says, "The symbols do not appear to me to warrant a more especial interpretation of them," p. 319. With all due respect to the Dean's opinion, I will humbly state what appears to me to be nearer the truth; and shall take the symbols with his interpretation for the most part, making only such additions of sense as seem to be warranted by Scripture.

Hail is destruction, so used in various parts of Scripture; fire is persecution; blood in its proper station, pure and unmixed, is life; "but

“flesh with the *life* thereof, which is the *blood* thereof,” Gen. ix. 4; but if poured out, is death; if mingled with any thing of inferior quality, it partakes of that quality, and is either death, or corruption: here it is poured out with hail and fire, destruction and persecution, and is consequently death; and it is cast upon the earth, or the church.

I see no reason with the Dean to confine the persecution to the Jewish converts, arising from the unconverted Jews; it seems to me to be more general; and to signify the persecutions which fell upon the pure primitive church, whether proceeding from the Jews or Gentiles: the land or earth is used in other places to signify the church in general, and if it is to be here confined, it is a solitary instance.

The trees are those who are well rooted in the soil, and the grass, who have little or no root: “And he shall be like a tree planted by the rivers of water,” Ps. i. 3. “Let them be even as grass growing upon the house-tops, which withereth afore it be plucked up,” Ps. cxxix. 6. By these persecutions a considerable proportion of the primitive church, and the steady, eminent professors of pure Christianity, are to be destroyed; and *all* the grass, *all those* who for want of root in the times of temptation fall away.

A great mountain burning with fire:—a mountain is the seat of power, as mount Sinai, mount Sion, and Christ's kingdom, which is described as a mountain, Isa. ii. 23. It is the symbol then of power burning with persecuting zeal; cast into the sea. The sea, in opposition to the land or earth, the church of God, is the Gentile world: a third part of which became blood; a large proportion of Gentiles had indeed at this time received the word of life, the pure blood, but being mixed with the waters of heathenism, their Christianity was corrupt, in consequence of which a third part of the living creatures in the sea lost their spiritual life, and a third part of the ships, or churches^b, those who were more conspicuously eminent, who were raised above the surface of the waves, were destroyed or corrupted.

“^c And there fell a great star from heaven,
 “ burning as it were a lamp, and it fell upon the
 “ third part of the rivers, and upon the foun-
 “ tains of waters; and the name of the star is
 “ called Wormwood: and the third part of the

^b The Basilicæ were built in the form of ships, viz. long and narrow. These were converted into the first Christian churches, whence most churches have since been built in this form. Churches then in prophetic language are called ships with singular propriety. Kennet, Part II. chap. 5.

^c Ver. 10, 11.

“waters became wormwood; and many men died of the waters, because they were made bitter^d.” A star is a minister of religion: fallen from heaven, is fallen from the truth: burning like a lamp, a few remaining rays of truth shining with a dim light: the rivers and fountains of waters, spiritual and scriptural doctrines: made bitter, perverted by tradition and false glosses: and many men died of the waters, died a spiritual death.

Now though I may grant that these trumpets might sound simultaneously, or that the commands for persecutions and corruptions might go forth at the same time, and that they did even affect the church together in some degree, yet I must contend, that their respective effects were *principally* felt by the church at *different* and *particular* periods; and I think that the symbols will warrant a more particular interpretation. Hail and fire mingled with blood, I have interpreted to mean destruction and persecution unto death; there are no marks here of corruption, and therefore the death here is temporal. This especial interpretation of the symbols will in this instance fix their direction to the pure and primitive church; I do not mean to say that there were no corruptions in

^d Rev. i. 20. Dan. xii. 3. Mal. ii. 7.

the primitive church; the contrary is the fact; but they were during this period of little or no account; and this period extended from our Saviour's ministry to the year 175, or thereabouts.

The next set of symbols contains the burning mountain, and the sea, with blood, death, and destruction. In the burning mountain I think we are agreed; in the sea also, excepting that Dean Woodhouse opposes it to the Jewish converts only, whereas I put it in opposition to the whole Christian church; blood mingled with water, according to my interpretation, is corruption: "All the waters that were in the river "were turned to blood, and the Egyptians "could not drink of the water of the river;" why? because "it stank," or was corrupt. Thus the Gentile world received the words of life which were sown amongst them by the power of the sword; but being mixed with the Pagan waters of superstition and philosophy, the fruit produced was corrupt. In consequence of this corruption of the sea, a third part of the living creatures in the sea died, that is, a spiritual death; and in consequence of the false and fiery zeal of the burning mountain, a third part of the ships were destroyed, or suffered by persecu-

tion a temporal death. Thus persecution and corruption went hand in hand to the detriment of the church. I must therefore, as I think I am fully justified in so doing, place the effects of this trumpet between the year 175 and the subversion of the Roman empire, when the mountain had burnt itself out, or rather when the fire was smothered for a time. From hence it appears that this burning mountain represents the power of a corrupt church bearing sway under the banners of imperial tyranny.

In the symbols of the third trumpet there is but little difference between the Dean and myself. I have indeed made the fallen star more particularly applicable than he has done; but there is one expression which he has not noticed, and which in my mind, when rightly understood, gives a particular application to the whole trumpet. It is observable, that under the first and second trumpets, the term of a *third part*, whatever proportion that may be understood to mean, is applied to the sufferers; a considerable proportion no doubt, but by no means all, or nearly all. Under this trumpet the expression is varied, and it is, *many* men shall die. Now the word *many*^f in its lowest

^f Matt. xx. 28; xxvi. 28. Mark x. 45; xiv. 24. Rom. v. 15; viii. 20; xli. 5. 1 Cor. x. 17, 38. Heb. ix. 28.

sense means a considerable proportion ; in a higher sense, a large proportion ; in its highest sense, *all*, or nearly all ; and in this sense *πᾶσι* is very frequently used throughout the New Testament. In this sense I am justified in using it ; *all*, or nearly *all*, men shall die a spiritual death ; and I think I am further justified in applying this trumpet to those dark ages of the black horse, when all Christendom was obscured under the heavy clouds of ignorance and superstition ; a period extending, as will hereafter appear, from the year 800 to the Reformation.

The symbols of the fourth trumpet are yet to be considered ; and I have reserved this trumpet by itself, because it has a difficulty purely its own. The sun, moon, and stars, are smitten as to a third part of them. The sun, I presume, symbolizes revealed religion ; “ but unto you “ that fear my name shall the Sun of righteousness arise with healing on his wings,” Mal. iv. 2. The moon, who borrows her light from the sun, represents what we call natural religion ; and the stars, ministers. Religion then, whether natural, revealed, or taught, will be withdrawn, as to one third of its blessed influence ; it will neither illuminate the cultivated mind, nor cheer the gloomy recesses of the human heart. Well does this dreadful trumpet agree

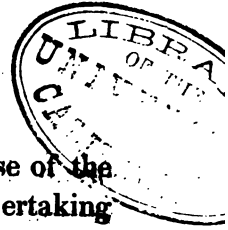
with the fourth seal, the horrid reign of the pale horse. But here arises the difficulty ; this cadaverous horse has power given him only over a fourth part of the church*, whereas these heavenly luminaries are smitten as to a third part. Are we to understand, that though this horse has power over a certain portion, his baneful influence will be permitted to palsy only a third part of the religious sentiments and feelings of each individual within the pale of his power ? or that his power, being confined within a fourth, his influence will nevertheless extend over a third of the church of God ? Either the one or the other of these questions will solve the difficulty ; but they themselves cannot be solved, till time has passed away.

* Rev. vi. 8.

REVELATION. CHAP. IX.

ON THE FIFTH AND SIXTH TRUMPETS.

AS there was a preparation in heaven for the sounding of the trumpet, so is there again here for the introduction of the woes, which marks in my apprehension a reverting of the scene. An angel was heard flying through the midst of heaven, crying, "Woe, woe, woe to the inhabitants of the earth, by reason of the other voices of the trumpet of the three angels which are yet to sound." These three woe trumpets I conceive to be a further amplification and enlargement upon the miserable state of the Christian church, described by the former trumpets and seals. The first seal and first trumpet indeed have not a woe attached to them, forasmuch as the woes are spiritual; and the primitive church being pure, though in a state of persecution, was blessed; "for blessed are those that die in the Lord." The three woe trumpets then are respectively attached to the red, the black, and the pale horse; the second, third, and fourth trumpets. Having thus arranged the seals and horses, the trumpets and



woes, I shall proceed to give my sense of the woes foretold. . . In this part of my undertaking I feel the pressure of great difficulty, as I must here differ from all preceding commentators, and that materially; nevertheless, by the arrangement which I have made, and the sense of the seals and trumpets which I have adopted, I do not despair of giving that interpretation which the text and historical truth seem to warrant; always keeping in view, that the affairs of the Christian church must be explained by circumstances arising in and bearing upon that church. In explaining these woes, I shall chiefly confine myself to the two first, because I consider them as already past; the third is now passing, or is to come.

The first woe I conceive to be that state of depravity and corruption introduced into the church, by a mixture of heathen learning and philosophy with the pure doctrines of the Gospel, that monstrous compound of heathenism with Christianity, of the metaphysical subtleties of Plato, and the visionary fancies of the Gnostics, with the pure, the simple, the divine doctrines of Christ. I shall have to shew, that the date of this corruption, from the first introduction of heathen philosophy into the church, or rather when it began to be avowed by the church, to the time of its being conspicuously

predominant under its head, the great Constantine, and from that time^b to its final ruin, will well answer to the period given to the first woe by the Prophet. But it is necessary perhaps for me to shew why I depart from the received opinion, that by this woe is meant the irruption of the Saracens; I think I cannot do better than refer the reader to what Dean Woodhouse has said in this place^c. But I must remark, that these locusts in their first appearance are not warlike; they are not to kill, but only to torment; they are to hurt nothing but *men* who are not true Christians. Neither can I concede to the Dean his notion that this prophecy was fulfilled by the Gnostic heresy only:

^b “The banishment of Christians, on account of religious opinions, *began*, under the influence of the second seal, “with the reign of Constantine, and increased under that “of Theodosius.” Woodhouse, Apoc. p. 157. I consider the woe not so much persecution as corruption, a degenerate state of the church attended with mutual persecution.

^c Woodhouse, p. 228.

^d Trees, and other vegetables, represent the converts of religion, says Dean Woodhouse: I agree with him; our Saviour makes nearly the same allusion in his parable of the sower. Bishop Newton considers them in his explanation of the first trumpet as men, women, and children in general; in his explanation of the first woe, as literal trees, &c. at the same time he says, the locusts are symbolical: surely a strange discrepancy! but without it he could not apply this woe to the Saracens, for they destroyed men, women, and children, whether Christians, Jews, or Heathens.

it appears to me that this sect was too obscure, too little known, not of sufficient extent, and, above all, not of itself sufficiently prevalent in the western church, for the purpose; and the Dean himself states, that ecclesiastical history has preserved but few original documents belonging to their times. Again he says, in a note upon the place, "The exact time of the rise of "the Gnostics having *appeared* to occasion some "dispute in the literary world, it may be proper "to add a few more words on this subject." After he has endeavoured to establish his point in regard to their rise, he says, "Their continuance as a *prevalent pestilential* heresy "cannot be so accurately ascertained." It seems to me that the event fulfilling this prophecy ought to be very clearly and accurately ascertained, both in its commencement and its close: and not only so, but must also have a head connected with power, a king Apollyon, which the Gnostics as a sect by themselves never had. I feel the more assured of my own statement, because I am persuaded that this first woe is connected with the first beast, the rise of which I shall have occasion to place in this very period.

I shall therefore proceed to enter more fully into my view of the subject: but I must again take leave to remind my reader, that St. John

is prophesying of the west ; and though he may sometimes speak in general terms of the whole church before its division, or occasionally glance at the eastern part, yet his eye is stedfastly fixed upon the western ; and though any of these woes may have taken their original rise in the east, or elsewhere, yet it is their extension and domination over the western church that he means particularly to point out. Another thing also I wish my reader to keep constantly in mind, that these woes are spiritual, that it is the miserable, contaminated, corrupt state of religion which brings woe to the soul, and not temporal persecutions, which can afflict the body only ; “ Blessed are the dead which die “ in the Lord ;” to them is attached a blessing and not a woe. The first trumpet then which brings persecutions upon the church, in the period of the white horse, has not an overwhelming woe attached to it, for the church in this period was comparatively pure, but as evil doctrines were creeping into the church even during the time of this trumpet, it may so far partake of this woe ; and when corruptions increased and came to a domineering head under the second trumpet, or period of the red horse, to them is attached the first woe in its complete state.

Let us now attend to the word of prophecy.

“ And the fifth angel sounded ;” (the first was trumpet,) “ and I saw a star fall from heaven “ unto the earth ;” (‘ a falling star is a minister of evil ;) “ and to him was given the key of the “ bottomless pit.” The bottomless pit I conceive to be, the very lowest abyss of what may be considered deep, as of the sea ; and when applied spiritually, of iniquity : I have before considered the sea to be the emblem of the Gentile world ; the bottomless pit then must be heathenism. “ And he opened the bottomless “ pit, and there arose a smoke out of the pit, as “ the smoke of a great furnace ; and the sun “ and the air were darkened by reason of the “ smoke of the pit.” The smoke is a foul vapour, a cloud of corrupt doctrines, obscuring the sun, the light of truth, the Gospel of Christ ; and darkening the minds of those who were illuminated by his blessed ray : “ And “ there came out of the smoke locusts upon the “ earth : and unto them was given power, as “ the scorpions of the earth have power. And “ it was commanded them that they should not “ hurt the grass of the earth, neither any green “ thing, neither any tree ; but only those men “ which have not the seal of God in their fore- “ heads. And to them it was given that they

“ should not kill them, but that they should be
 “ tormented five months: and their torment
 “ *was* as the torment of a scorpion, when he
 “ striketh a man.” Locusts, destructive insects
 from the east, natural devourers of every green
 thing, but in this case debarred from their ge-
 nuine food, power only was given them to hurt
 with their scorpion-like tails, their tails of
 poison; corrupt teachers then they are, hea-
 then philosophers, false prophets: “ The pro-
 phet that teacheth lies, he is the tail,” Isa. ix.
 15. Scorpions, venomous reptiles, whose stings
 are poisonous, destructive doctrines: trees and
 grass, those who are rooted and those who are
 growing in religion: kill and torment, destroy
 and seduce: not to destroy, but to seduce; not
 sincere Christians, but worldly minded; and for
 five months, that is 150 years. Here then let
 us pause, and compare this prophecy with his-
 tory.

The prophecy is this: a minister of evil shall
 introduce the principles of heathen philosophy
 into the church; the mist of philosophy shall
 darken the minds of Christians, and hide from
 their eyes the light of Gospel truth; out of this
 mist shall swarms of eastern teachers arise, who
 shall propagate their wild flights of fancy, their
 fanatical opinions, and their poisonous doctrines,
 among the bewildered multitude: upon their

approach to the western church, they are debarred from hurting the true Christian, and power only is given them to seduce, whilst they are restricted from persecution : and this state of seduction shall last 150 years.

We will now turn to history, and from thence we are taught that heresies began to arise in the Christian church even in the days of the apostles. St. John tells us in his first Epistle, chap. ii. 18. that “ even now there are many “ Antichrists ;” and St. Paul points out the very nature of those heresies, in his Epistle to the Colossians, chap. ii. 8. “ Beware lest “ any man spoil you through philosophy and “ vain deceits, after the tradition of men, after “ the rudiments of the world, and not after “ Christ.” It matters not to enquire who was the first broacher of the Gnostic heresy amongst Christians ; whoever he might be, he was an early corrupter, and is fitly represented as one who opened the bottomless pit. The Gnostic heresy was an emanation of the oriental philosophy, it pervaded the eastern church from the earliest times, and increased like a leprosy over the whole ; this is a well known fact, but for its history and genius, I shall refer my reader to Mosheim’s enlarged view of the ecclesiastical history of the three first centuries. My business now is with the western church, and

I shall endeavour to shew when this cloud began to spread over the western hemisphere.

The oriental philosophy, though branching off into a variety of sects, yet combined them all in one grand principle; they all acknowledged one universal, everlasting, supreme God, from whom emanated a multitude of Eons, inferior in degree as they were further removed from the first cause; by one of these principal Eons was this world created, by him it is governed, and he is the God of the Jews, and of all the other nations.

The western philosophy, which was that of Greece, and adopted by Rome, had also a variety of sects, but widely differed from the oriental in this, that each sect had its own first cause: some denied a God altogether, others doubted; some made him a God of indolence, others a God of restricted power; whilst that of Plato was what approached nearest to Christian doctrines, and was therefore the most likely to be endured or thought upon by Christian professors.

Through Platonism then was the scorpion poison to be conveyed, and this was effected in due time under the auspices of Ammonius Saccas; his object was to assimilate all modes of philosophy, and unite all religions under one: his plan succeeded so well, as to create a nu-

merous sect, who went under the appellation of the new Platonicians. But before this could take place, it was necessary to sow the seeds of philosophy in the Christian church, to cultivate a taste for its precepts, and a love for its principles: this baneful fruit was brought to perfection in the school of Alexandria, established by Pantænus about the year 180. "The immediate nursery, and very cradle, as it were, of "Christian philosophy," as Mosheim terms it, vol. ii. p. 113. From hence issued forth that cloud of Gnostic philosophy, which darkened the western hemisphere, that swarm of Egyptian locusts enveloped in more than Egyptian darkness. But Pantænus and others had been teachers of philosophy both at Rome and other places, previously to the institution of the Alexandrian school; we may then reasonably expect to find philosophy in the church prior to that era, I do not mean as professed by one or two Christians, but so as to give a character to the disposition of the church, so as to arrest the notice of her enemies as well as friends. The reader will not expect me to give him a precise date, when such a change of character took place, but I can give him a date when such a change seems to have been noticed. The reign of Marcus Aurelius the philosopher, was a period of severe persecution against the Chris-

tians, from its beginning to the year 177. For the bitter enmity of this philosophical emperor against the Christians, Mosheim has given a good, and, as it seems to me, the true reason, on his own devotedness to philosophy, and his contempt for the Christians who despised it. "From whence this ill will," says Mosheim, "of the emperor towards the Christians proceeded, is not to be ascertained from any memorials that have reached our times. It may however, with great probability, be conjectured, that from the representation of the philosophers, to whose guidance he appears to have entirely surrendered himself, he was led to regard the Christians as a set of absurd, irrational, obstinate, and conceited men, and therefore, upon the principles of that harsh and rigid system of moral discipline to which he was devoted, conceived it expedient rather to destroy than tolerate them." Vol. ii. p. 66.^s Again he says, in a note, page 88. "This war of the philosophers against Christianity had its commencement under the reign of Marcus, who was himself a philosopher, and made it his study to encourage and gratify philosophers; neither had any of the Greek and Roman philosophers, previously to this period, embraced Christianity, *nor had*

^s Vidal's Trans.

“ *the Christians applied themselves to the cultivation of philosophy*; indeed it was a thing which they were expressly enjoined by St. Paul to avoid.” If then the want of philosophy amongst Christians was the cause of the emperor’s enmity against them, and if that enmity was carried up to the year 177, as it clearly appears that it was, by the severe persecution against them in that year at Lyons, it follows, that philosophy had gained no ground in the western church in the more distant provinces up to that period. But if we allow that the seeds of philosophy had been sown at Rome, by Pantænus and others, prior to this period, and that they broke forth into fruit from the school of Pantænus in 180, we may conclude that philosophy was in the church at Rome and its neighbourhood prior to 177. And for this I will produce the following argument: whatever credit may be due to the miracle, said to have been performed by the thundering legion for the preservation of the imperial army, when Marcus was at war with the Marcomanni, it seems to be agreed by most, if not all the learned disputants, (Mosheim excepted,) that a certain degree of lenity arose in the emperor’s conduct towards the Christians from this time, which of course the advocates for the miracle have attributed to that cause: Mosheim com-

bats this conclusion, upon the grounds of this persecution, which afterwards broke out at Lyons in the year 177, the miracles having taken place in 174 : but in this Mosheim pushes his argument too far ; the emperor might persecute the Christians at Lyons at the same time that he favoured them at Rome, and this upon the very principle which Mosheim has stated for his hatred of the Christians, viz. his devotedness to philosophy. Giving then no credit to the miracle, but giving credit to the lenity stated by the advocates of the miracle, and believing that the emperor continued to act on the same principles, we shall have sufficient reason to conclude, that philosophy was in the church in the year 175. This date then I feel myself warranted to assume for the first appearance of the locusts in the western church : now if to this date we add 150 years, the period of their continuance in this state, we shall be brought to the year 325, immediately after Constantine became sole emperor, and, what is more to the purpose, the very year in which, by his sole authority, he convened the first general council at ^h Nice, in

^h I am aware, that that learned and judicious Prelate, the present Bishop of Lincoln, has spoken favourably of the four first general councils, so far as some of their doctrinal decisions are concerned ; but it is only so far : the council of Nice did certainly not meet in the spirit of Christianity, nor

which he himself presided as head of the church.

From this time the locusts assume a different character, and they are more fully described by the Prophet: "And the shapes of the locusts *were* like unto horses prepared unto battle;" (the appearance of *warlike* spirits, contention, force, and persecution;) "and on their heads *were*, as it were, crowns like gold;" (they were in power, imperial and priestly power;) "and their faces *were* as the faces of men;" (guided by human understanding;) "and they had hair, as the hair of women;" (seductive;) "and their teeth were as *the teeth* of lions;" (tyrannical;) "and they had breastplates, as it were breastplates of iron;" (not to be repulsed¹;) "and the sound of their wings was as the sound of chariots of many horses running to battle;" (this I suppose is to denote the very great influx and success of this pernicious philosophy, and the impetuosity with which it overwhelmed the church;) "and they had tails like unto

was the high priest of Jupiter a proper conductor of their deliberations in the interests of their heavenly Master.

¹ Here also seems to be a mixture of three of the great monarchies mentioned by Daniel; the lion's teeth of Babylon, the long hair for which Greece was famous, and the iron of Rome; and the locusts themselves of Persian origin, being sprung from the philosophy of Zoroaster, will form a combination of the four.

“scorpions, and there were stings in their tails;” (in this they were like the locusts of the former period :) “and their power *was* to hurt men five months :” (the same period is also given to these : but whereas the former had only a limited power, these have an extended one ; the former had only power to seduce, to torment the unsealed ; all who were liable to seduction, who were tainted with heathenism ; these were armed with persecuting power, which might extend over men in general :) “and they had a king over them ; *which* is the angel of the bottomless pit, whose name in the Hebrew tongue is Abaddon, but in the Greek tongue hath his name Apollyon.” This can be no other than the beast whom St. John afterwards saw arising from the sea, and to whom the dragon gave his power, and his seat, and great authority.

Having thus explained the symbols, let us again state the prophecy in less ambiguous terms : These locusts or teachers of philosophical Christianity shall assume a spirit of contention, backed by force and persecution ; they shall exalt human reason, and the learning of philosophy above the precepts of their Saviour, and the divine doctrine of his Gospel ; they shall enforce their tenets with imperial and pontifical power ; uniting in themselves the tyranny

of the four great monarchies of the world which had been connected with the fortunes, and had interfered with the economy and worship of God's church; the feeble voice of truth shall not be heard amongst them, for in their multitude and impetuosity they shall drown the cries of the poor and needy; the poison of their doctrines shall be disseminated amongst the whole church, and they shall tyrannize for 150 years. The arch-fiend himself will be at their head, or one to whom he will delegate his power.

The history of this is very short: philosophy did not appear in the western church till the year 175; after that period it seems to have spread like a leprosy through the whole, but without temporal power, for 150 years: the conversion of the empire then took place, and raised the church to the summit of the throne; here she was enrobed in imperial purple, and nourished, supported, and enforced her corrupted philosophical Christianity through the Roman world for another period of 150 years, when learning and philosophy, with all their pride and pomp, suffered shipwreck in the wreck of Rome.

It will be here observed, that I have considered the five months, twice mentioned, as two periods; Bishop Newton saw the propriety of this, but seems to have made a different deter-

mination. The change which takes place in the character of the locusts I think demands it ; and its being introduced in each change of character, I think sufficiently proves it. It will also be observed, that I have not touched upon the sixth verse : “ And in those days shall men “ seek death, and shall not find it ; and shall “ desire to die, and death shall flee from them.” This is a passage which I think cannot be understood, without having a clear conception of the woe ; that being obtained, we find in this verse the strongest characteristic of the woe. Dean Woodhouse has omitted it altogether ; Bishop Newton has trifled with it, and others have misapplied it. Bishop Newton has supposed, that the desire of death among men arose from the calamities and miseries brought upon them by the ferocity of the Saracens ; there was surely nothing peculiar in this to make it worthy of the word of prophecy : equal calamities, equal miseries, have in a hundred instances been brought upon men by wars and conquests, and many men may probably have equally wished for death : here is no distinctive mark of a woe like this. Others again, who have misapplied this verse, have thought that it might be interpreted of those early Christians, who, ambitious of the crown of martyrdom, flocked in multitudes to the heathen tribunals, accusing themselves of Christianity ; but were dismissed,

disappointed of the death which they sought; and the martyr's crown to which they aspired : it was not death which these men sought in consequence of woe, but through death, as the means, they sought that crown which was their object. We cannot but pity the misguided infatuation of these worthy zealots, but we cannot see in them distinctive marks of woe ; of a woe denounced from heaven by an angel. The word death, as I conceive, does not mean literal death, the separation of soul from body ; but it is a symbol, a metaphor of that abstraction of soul from body, of mind from matter, which had taken possession of the bewildered imagination of the oriental philosopher, and formed a prime tenet of his fanciful system. It is natural to suppose that this wild and fanciful tenet should make its way into the western church with its parent gnosticism ; and for the proof of this we will consult Mosheim, who, speaking of the moral discipline of Ammonius Saccas, says, “ To this monstrous coalition of heterogeneous doctrines its fanatical author added “ a rule of life and manners, which carried an “ aspect of high sanctity and uncommon austerity. He indeed permitted the people to “ live according to the laws of their country, “ and the dictates of nature ; but a more sublime rule was laid down for the wise : they

“ were to raise above all terrestrial things, by
 “ the towering efforts of holy contemplation,
 “ those souls whose origin was celestial and di-
 “ vine. They were ordered to extenuate, by hun-
 “ ger, thirst, and other mortifications, the slug-
 “ gish body, which confines the activity, and re-
 “ strains the liberty, of the immortal spirit;
 “ that thus in this life they might enjoy com-
 “ munion with the supreme Being, and ascend
 “ after death, active and unencumbered, to the
 “ universal Parent, to live in his presence for
 “ ever*.”

This ascetical doctrine then made its way
 into the western church with oriental philosophy,
 and is a woeful characteristic of its parent's ge-
 nius. This then I conceive is the death here
 meant; and however the wretched devotee
 might flatter himself, or persuade the people,
 that he had gained his ends, we at this time of
 day cannot give him credit for such reality; but
 must think that death fled from him. Thus in
 those days did men seek death, and did not
 find it; and desired to die, and death fled from
 them.

Having thus disposed of the first woe, I will
 proceed to the second. The first thing to be no-
 ticed is the declaration, that “ one woe is past;
 “ and behold there come two woes more here-

* Mosheim, vol. i. p. 173.

“ after ;” that is, at some distance of time from the ending of the first woe, as I understand it ; especially as it is said at the ending of the second woe, “ the second woe is past, and behold the “ third woe cometh quickly.” Here then is to be a period of time elapsing between the ending of the first woe, and the beginning of the second. And the angel was ordered to loose the four angels which were bound in the river Euphrates. The four angels I conceive to be four leaders of some great power. The river Euphrates was the great boundary on the east between the Jewish state and the Gentile nations ; between the circumcised and uncircumcised ; between the church of God and the heathen ; and, symbolically taken, between the Christian and Pagan world ; and may be considered as the partition wall, whatever it might be, which kept back Paganism from overwhelming Christianity ; but this being removed, an irruption immediately took place. Accordingly we are informed by history, that no sooner was Theodosius the Great, Emperor of the East, removed by death, but the western empire was overflowed by an inundation of Goths and Vandals, led on by their four great commanders, Alaric, Genseric, Attila, and Odoacer¹. They were prepared for

¹ “ If the subjects of Rome could be ignorant of their obligations to the great Theodosius, they were too soon con-

slaughter for an hour, a day, a month, and a year^m; that is, 391 years and one month. It is not said, that the duration of the second woe is to be 391 years, but that they were prepared for slaughter so long; and as it appears to me, by the tyranny, ignorance, and barbarism, which they introduced, they were to be during this period preparing men for the woe which was in consequence to arise. Now if this be the true interpretation, as I have persuaded myself it isⁿ, it gives us a sufficient period of time between the two woes, and will exactly accord with what I consider to be the second woe, which, like the first, must be spiritual; for they both proceed from the scorpion-like stings: and the

“vinced how painfully the spirit and abilities of their deceased sovereign had supported the frail and mouldering edifice of the empire. He died in the month of January, and before the end of the winter in the same year the Gothic nation was in arms.” Gibbon, vol. iii. p. 134. 4to.

^m Rev. ix. 15.

ⁿ It may be objected, that I have made the second trumpet to sound before the first had finished, and before the first woe was come to an end; but there is no date affixed to the duration or the beginning of these trumpets sounding, and I have placed the second woe nearly 400 years posterior to the ending of the first: the dates belong to the woes, and not to the trumpets. The second woe certainly could not take place during the existence of the first, but the preparation for that woe might; and this furnishes a strong reason that I am right in ascribing the date of 391 years to a preparation, and not to the woe itself.

result of this woe is, that notwithstanding, "men
 " repented not of the works of their hands, that
 " they should not worship devils, and idols of
 " gold, and silver, and brass, and stone, and of
 " wood, which neither can see, nor hear, nor
 " walk : neither repented they of their murders,
 " nor of their sorceries, nor of their fornication,
 " nor of their thefts." When did this foul sin
 gather to a head? when was this woe firmly
 established? I will not hesitate to say, in the
 year 799, when the Bishop of Rome was sent
 back by Charlemagne to reseat himself in his
 pontifical chair in triumph, with all his temporal
 sovereignties confirmed, and when he in the
 following year raised an image to the beast, by
 crowning with his own hands Charlemagne em-
 peror of the West. Now subtract 391 from 799,
 and we have 408, the year in which Alaric
 formed the first siege of Rome; after which the
 Romans never lifted up their hands in battle
 against the Goths.

But what is particularly worthy of remark, is
 the exactness of the accomplishment of this
 prophecy: they were to be prepared for an
 hour, a day, a month, and a year. To account
 for the hour, we must attend to a piece of his-
 tory extracted from Gibbon. I have considered
 Theodosius as the Euphratean barrier against
 the four angels; but if by the Euphrates a river

be meant as the boundary between barbarism and the civilized church, the Danube will in every point answer our purpose; for at this time, viz. at the death of Theodosius, as Gibbon very emphatically says, “ the barriers of the
 “ Danube were thrown open; the savage warriors of Scythia issued from their forests; and
 “ the uncommon severity of the winter allowed
 “ the poet Claudian to remark, that they rolled
 “ their ponderous waggons over the broad and
 “ icy back of the indignant river.” But whether we admit Theodosius or the Danube, it is evident, that the angels, though they were loosened, were not immediately prepared, that is, they gained no firm footing in the empire till after the death of the famous general Stilicho; this event took place on August 23, 408; in September following, Alaric invades Italy, and in October we find him at the gates of Rome. But in the progress of his march, a very remarkable event took place, and in giving an account of it, Mr. Gibbon has made use of a very remarkable expression: alluding to the weak measures of the imperial ministers, he says, “ These measures, so advantageous to an enemy, Alaric
 “ would have approved, and might perhaps
 “ have suggested, but it may seem doubtful,
 “ whether the barbarian would have promoted
 “ his interest at the expence of the inhuman

“ and absurd cruelty which was perpetrated by
 “ the direction, or at least with the connivance,
 “ of the imperial ministers. The foreign auxi-
 “ liaries, who had been attached to the person
 “ of Stilicho, lamented his death, but the desire
 “ of revenge was checked by the natural appre-
 “ hension for the safety of their wives and chil-
 “ dren, who were detained as hostages in the
 “ strong cities of Italy, where they had likewise
 “ deposited their most valuable effects. At the
 “ same *hour*,” (this is Gibbon’s expression,) “ at
 “ the same hour, and as if by a common signal,
 “ the cities of Italy were polluted by the same
 “ horrid scenes of universal massacre and pil-
 “ lage, which involved in promiscuous destruc-
 “ tion the families and fortunes of the barba-
 “ rians. Exasperated by such an injury, which
 “ might have awakened the tamest and most
 “ servile spirit, they cast a look of indignation
 “ and hope towards the camp of Alaric, and
 “ unanimously swore to pursue with just and
 “ implacable war, the perfidious nation that
 “ had so basely violated the laws of hospitality.
 “ By the imprudent conduct of the ministers of
 “ Honorius, the Republic lost the assistance,
 “ and deserved the enmity, of thirty thousand
 “ of her bravest soldiers ; and the weight of
 “ that formidable army, which alone might have
 “ determined the event of the war, was trans-

“ferred from the scale of the Romans into that
“of the Goths°.”

From hence it appears, that in consequence of the death of the Roman general Stilicho, which took place on Aug. 23, 408, Alaric invaded Italy in the subsequent September, and in the course of a month, or in the following October, he was at the gates of Rome: but in the course of this month, a remarkable circumstance had occurred, which expedited his march and success against the Roman capital, and was in fact the preponderating weight which turned the scale against the Romans; I mean, the universal massacre and pillage in the Italian cities. In one hour, as Mr. Gibbon has been pleased with a curious coincidence to express it, or in one month, as he has described it, did this atrocious deed with its immediate consequences take place, and I must therefore consider this month to be the hour of preparation for the woe foretold by the Prophet. Here again I have deviated from the calculation of Bishop Newton, who considers an hour as the measure of fifteen days or the twenty-fourth part of a year, supposing that the Jews divide their day as we do into twenty-four hours; but the fact is, that their nights were measured by watches,

° Gibbon, vol. iii. p. 191. 4to.

and their days, or the space between sunrise and sunset, by hours, which were twelve; a prophetic hour then is the twelfth part of a prophetic day, i. e. one year, and is consequently a month.

And as to the other times, they are also exact: in the year 408, Alaric first besieged Rome; in 409, he became its master, and exercised his authority by appointing Attalus its new emperor; in the year 439, Genseric established the Vandal kingdom in Africa by the destruction of Carthage^p, and in the year 799, the Popedom was confirmed. Now then succeeded this second woe of intellectual darkness, superstition, and slavery; which continued down to the Reformation, or the sounding of the seventh trumpet, and the third woe.

Here then we have the second woe in what are emphatically called the dark ages, and under the influence of the black horse; and here we have also the rise of the second beast; and thus we see the third or black horse, the third trumpet, the second woe, and second beast, in perfect connection; as we before found the second or red horse, the second trumpet, the first woe, and first beast.

^p The power of Genseric, king of the Vandals, was not established in Africa till he surprised Carthage on Oct. 9, 439. Gibbon.

I have before observed of the first woe, what I must repeat in regard to this, that they are spiritual and intellectual; both proceeding from the scorpion-like stings; in this they are alike, for the horses seen in the vision and the second woe had tails that "were like unto serpents, and had heads, and with them they do hurt," ver. 19. For the first woe, men required but little preparation; the polished and philosophical heathenism of the Greeks and Romans soon made its way amongst the tenets of Christianity by subtilty and refinement; nor was war and slaughter permitted to the locusts; even the Dioclesian persecution was levelled rather against the books and doctrines of the Christians, than against their persons. Not so in regard to the second; more time was necessary to debase the mind to ignorance and barbarism, than to corrupt and bewilder it; accordingly we find, that a certain period was given to effect the purpose, viz. 391 years, and the Euphratean cavalry proceeded emitting fire, smoke, and brimstone, from their mouths to the destruction of a third part of men¹. By this hellish compound of desolation and paganism men became sufficiently brutalized to admit the second woe, and bend their necks to

¹ For a further description of the locusts and Euphratean cavalry, see Woodhouse, p. 258.

the degrading yoke of the second beast: then they felt the sting and the woe was complete. Observe now the effects of the two woes. The first, which is that of heathen learning and philosophy, brings men under the dominion of the devil, the king Abaddon or Apollyon, that prince or beast to whom the dragon gave his power, and his seat, and great authority. The second, which is that of ignorance, superstition, and slavery, sinks them in the gulph of darkness, idolatry, and wickedness.

Another observation that I have to make is this; that though the horses of the four seals make their public appearance at different periods, they are all in existence from the beginning: the white horse certainly from the first preaching of the Gospel, but he disappears, and we see no more of him till the great consummation: the horse of philosophical error may be traced even to the times of the apostles, but he did not effectually shew himself till corruption rose into power: the horse of ignorance and barbarism may be found in very early times, but his influence was not predominant, till the irruption of the Goths and Vandals had brought men under his yoke by establishing the Popedom: the horse of infidelity also is of very ancient date, but he never dared to rear his brazen front in the Christian church till the time of the

Reformation. And as these horses have existed before their allotted periods of influence, so they will remain with their woes and beasts for judgment under the seventh trumpet, when we shall see the rider with his white horse returning conquering, and having conquered ^r.

^r As the horses are the influencing principles of the woes, this observation is also applicable to *them*: they are all in being from early times, to the last, but it is the *power* of the woes to which we must affix the date; to the third woe there is no date, but we are told that it begins when the second ends: the influence of schism, scepticism, and infidelity we have severely experienced ever since the Reformation, but if it should rise into persecuting power, we have the comfort of understanding that it will be but for a short time, for one *hour*. Rev. xvii. 12.

REVELATION. CHAP. X. AND XI.

ON THE LITTLE BOOK, THE MEASURING OF THE
TEMPLE, AND THE PROPHESYING OF THE
TWO WITNESSES.

AFTER describing the second woe, St. John proceeds as follows : (ver. 1.) “ And I saw another mighty angel come down from heaven, “ clothed with a cloud : and a rainbow *was* “ upon his head, and his face *was* as it were “ the sun, and his feet as pillars of fire : and he “ had in his hand a little book open.” The placing of this little book, so that its contents may form a regular line of historical interpretation, has been a stumbling-block to every commentator : Bishop Newton says, (and even the enlightened Woodhouse is inclined to agree with him,) that the final conflict of the beast with the witnesses, their death and resurrection, may be yet to come. The plan, which I have adopted, of bringing one part of the prophetic writings to explain and fill up another, will entirely do away this difficulty ; and I humbly conceive that the contents of this little book illustrate the preceding prophecies, and give us in more plain terms the state of Christ’s

church and its ministers during the continuance of the two first woes; through an era of 1260 years: The little book is brought forward immediately after the description of the two first woes, and before the third woe trumpet sounds*; it seems therefore to have a retrospective interpretation; it sums up as it were the events of the church under those woes, and determines their duration; and it is declared immediately upon the resurrection of the witnesses, that the second woe is past, and behold the third woe cometh quickly. If then the interpretation of measuring the temple, and the humiliation of the two witnesses, will not only coincide with the interpretation of the woes, but will also throw a clearer light on their meaning, we cannot hesitate to keep the little book in that place which the apostle appears to have assigned to it.

There are two things to be noticed in this book, (for there can be no doubt that the Prophet was inspired with the prophecies of the 11th chapter in consequence of swallowing the little book,) and these two things are the state of the church in general, and that of its true ministers or professors in particular: the former

* If it has not a retrospective interpretation, how comes it to be placed here, between the second and third woes, bearing a period of 1260 years, when we are expressly told that the third woe comes quickly after the second?

designed by the measuring of the temple, and the latter by the witnesses prophesying in sackcloth.

The temple of God, and the altar, and them that worship therein, that is, the holiest part of the temple and the holiest worshippers, the holy and true Christians, are to be measured, i. e. are to be within measure^t, a small and faithful number in comparison with those who worship without: but the court, which is without, is not to be measured, is to be without measure, a large multitude of the Gentiles, who, although by conversion they are brought within the pale of the church, yet retaining their philosophical heathenism, and sinking into ignorance and superstition, are not true worshippers; and this state of the church is to continue (in the prophetic language) forty and two months, i. e. 1200 years.

The true and eminent professors of Christianity, the humble and faithful followers of Jesus Christ, are to minister in sackcloth and mourning for the same period; this being a natural consequence of the other. We have then only to look for such an era, when this state of Christ's church and his true professors is to be found: I will venture to point out that era,

^t See John iii. 34.

when the two woes already announced were raging in full force ; this I have already shewn must be during the influence of the red and black horses ; and as the exact period of 1260 years is now given us, it will be necessary to attend to particular events and their dates.

I have already shewn, that the locusts began to appear, or the first woe to arise, in the year 175, and that they received an impulse of increase from the Alexandrian school of Pantænus in year 180, but it was some time before they overwhelmed the church so as to become predominant ; this I conceive to have taken place in the year 260 ; to support which, we will now examine the temper of the times at that period. I shall produce Mr. Gibbon and Mosheim as ample witnesses ; men of different principles, and different designs, but both in this instance uniting their evidence in the cause of truth.

We are not wanting in historical facts, even from Mr. Gibbon, to shew the greatness and severity of persecution which the church of Christ endured from the Roman emperors : and he will furnish us with many instances of their rage against Christianity, though he seems willing in general to persuade us that the saints slept upon beds of roses. Under the reign of Decius, says he, the Bishops of the most considerable

cities were removed by exile, or death ; the vigilance of the magistrates prevented the clergy of Rome, during sixteen months, from proceeding to a new election ; and it was the opinion of the Christians, that the emperor would more patiently endure a competitor for the purple, than a bishop in the capitol. Valerian adopted the maxims and imitated the severity of his predecessor Decius. The accession of Galienus restored peace to the church, in the year 260 ^a. Mosheim makes this observation upon the Decian persecution ; “The most unhappy circumstance of
 “ all these cruelties was, their fatal influence upon
 “ the faith and constancy of many of the sufferers ;
 “ for as this persecution was much more terrible
 “ than all those that preceded it, so a great number of Christians, dismayed, not at the approach
 “ of death, but at the aspect of those dreadful
 “ and lingering torments, which a barbarous
 “ magistracy had prepared to combat their constancy, fell from the profession of their faith,
 “ and secured themselves from punishment,
 “ either by offering sacrifices, or by burning incense, before the images of the gods, or by
 “ purchasing certificates from the Pagan priests.”
 Here seems to have been under this persecution a terrible depression of the church, and on the

^a Vol. i. p. 560. 4to.

part of the emperor a fixed determination to annihilate Christianity altogether; for we are told by Mosheim^x, “that he published most terrible and cruel edicts, by which the prætors were ordered, upon pain of death, either to extirpate the whole body of Christians without exception, or to force them, by torments of various kinds, to return to the Pagan worship.” As this persecution fell with so much severity upon the Christian church, and was attended with such terrible effects, I cannot but consider this as an era in which the minds of men were brought into such a state, as peculiarly fitted them to receive any impressions, and to entertain any doctrines, which might render them less obnoxious to the reigning powers. And this was soon put to the test; for when the devil failed in his endeavour to extirpate Christianity by force, he had recourse to arts strictly his own, and attempted to effect by corruption what he could not attain by persecution. That a flood of corruption did at this period pour in upon the church, I shall introduce Mr. Gibbon again, as an ample and unexceptionable witness^y. “The disciples of Christ passed above 40 years (from 260 to 303) in a state of prosperity far more dangerous to their virtue than the severest trials

^x Vol. i. p. 250. ^y Vol. i. p. 561. 4to. vol. ii. p. 454. 8vo.

" of persecution." And again he tells us *, that
 " the corruption of manners and principles so
 " forcibly lamented by Eusebius, may be con-
 " sidered not only as a consequence, but as a
 " proof of the liberty which the Christians en-
 " joyed and abused, under the reign of Diocele-
 " sian. Prosperity had relaxed the nerves of dis-
 " cipline. Fraud, envy, and malice prevailed in
 " every congregation. The Presbyters aspired
 " to the episcopal office, which every day be-
 " came an object more worthy of their ambition.
 " The bishops who contended with each other
 " for ecclesiastical preeminence appeared by
 " their conduct to claim a secular and tyranni-
 " cal power in the church, and the lively faith
 " which still distinguished the Christians from
 " the Gentiles was shewn much less in their
 " lives than in their controversial writings."
 He likewise tells us *, that " philosophy, her
 " most dangerous enemy, was now converted
 " into her most useful ally." He not only then
 has stated the fact, but has also informed us
 of the nature of these corruptions; that pride
 and self-sufficiency, the offspring of human
 learning and heathen philosophy, were succeed-
 ing to Christian humility, and the love of the

* Vol. i. p. 564. 4to. vol. ii. p. 459. 8vo. . * Vol. i. p. 565.
 4to. vol. ii. p. 462. 8vo.

world had superseded the love of God. It ever follows as a natural consequence, that where the pride of human reason prevails against the word of God, heresies will abound; when worldly mindedness takes the place of godliness, the devil will triumph. For a further account of this corrupt period, I will refer my reader to Mosheim, whose testimony is valuable, but not of so much value as that of an enemy. And how profusely the Platonic and other philosophical and worldly corruptions were sown amongst Christians in general in this particular period, so as to produce a very plentiful harvest, we may gather every where from these historians^b. Pure and simple Christianity was retiring into obscurity, and wolves in sheep's clothing ravened amongst the fold. This wavering, relaxed, degenerate, philosophising spirit of Christianity still gained strength, till it was urged to a crisis by the Dioclesian persecution; and rose in power under the little horn. This persecution, though ultimately as severe as the foregoing, seems at first to have taken a differ-

^b Gibbon, vol. i. pag. 398. 4to. "The declining age of learning and of mankind is marked however by the rise and rapid progress of the new Platonicians." Pag. 399. The new Platonicians would scarcely deserve a place in the history of science, but in that of the church the mention of them will very frequently occur.

ent direction, it was chiefly levelled against the churches, the writings and the books of the Christians, to annihilate the doctrine, and the very seeds and principles of Christianity, to obliterate its very remnants: see what Mosheim says in this place^c; and out of Gibbon, I shall quote but one passage from several pages^d; “That the bishops and presbyters should deliver all their sacred books into the hands of the magistrates; who were commanded, under the severest penalties, to burn them in a public and solemn manner.” This was the last persecution by the Roman emperors, and took place even while the little horn was growing up in strength amongst the ten.

We have now seen that the Gnosticism of the east grafted upon the Platonism of the west, forming what is called the philosophy of the new Platonicians, proceeding from the school of Alexandria, was at this period, viz. 260, fully admitted into the Christian church, and overwhelmed it with corruption. We may therefore readily suppose, that the professors and teachers of pure Christianity did for a little time make head, and struggle, though ineffectually, against these innovating enormities; that they sunk at last, and were reduced to the hard task of

^c Vol. i. p. 315. ^d Vol. i. p. 569. 4to. vol. ii. p. 468. 8vo.

keeping alive the smothered embers of a dying fire. We know from experience, that prosperity will not long contend with corruption ; and we have the fact recorded by Mr. Gibbon*, “ that “ the prosperity of this period was more fatal to “ the disciples of Christ, than the severest trials “ of persecution.” When an event comes on gradually, it is difficult to mark the precise point of time in which it absolutely takes place ; the sun sets in night, but we cannot note the moment in which he sinks below the horizon, not even in the clearest sky : just so, I presume, the witnesses put on their sackcloth. Nevertheless, there are two points of time which we may safely assume. When philosophy made her first attacks upon the Christian church, she was successfully kept at bay by the witnesses till the year 175 ; from that time, having gained a little ground, she pushed the witnesses with more and increasing success, till they sank in the year 260, and they began to put on their mourning when their voices could be no longer heard. In the year 292 (as it will hereafter more fully appear) their sackcloth was fixed upon them by the rise of the little horn. From hence we may see the beginning and the full establishment of the witnesses in sackcloth, which will agree

* Vol. i. p. 561. 4to. vol. ii. p. 454. 8vo.

with the corresponding putting off, and the final renovation of pure doctrine. For in the year 260 the witnesses began to put on their sackcloth, when the church had mixed heathen learning with Gospel truths. In the year 1520 they began to put off their sackcloth, when Luther withdrew himself from the communion of the Church of Rome, and with his own hands publicly burnt the Pope's bull. In the year 292 their mourning was confirmed by the remarkable change which took place in the constitution of the Roman empire, when Dioclesian admitted Constantius and others as co-emperors with himself, when the little horn began to rise, as will hereafter more fully appear when I come to treat of that circumstance. And in the year 1552 the treaty of Passau was wrested by the Protestants from Charles the Fifth^f; by which the Protestant religion was finally placed upon a rock^g. The temple was now thrown open without measure, and the witnesses could publicly prophecy without danger,

And when they shall have finished their testimony, the Prophet tells us, the beast shall overcome them and kill them; their dead bodies shall lie unburied in the streets three days and a

^f Robertson's History of Charles V. vol. iv. p. 101.

^g 260 added to 1260 makes 1520; and

292 . . . 1260 . . . 1552.

half; they shall then be revived by the spirit of God, and stand upon their feet, and shall be exalted into heaven. Historical facts will amply and clearly elucidate this remarkable prophecy. In the year 1547^b the fatal battle of Muhlberg took place, between the Protestants and the imperial Charles, in which the former were cut to pieces, and their cause seemed to be totally suppressed; but it was not annihilated: this is what I understand by their bodies being killed, but not buried.

This state of affairs remained for exactly three years and a half, when the Protestants regained strength, stood up to battle once more, and overcame their antagonist at Magdeburg, in the year 1550^c; and forced from him the treaty of Passau, which was signed in 1552. Their cause was thus established on a firm foundation, and has been ever since unshaken. Here then we see the witnesses finishing their testimony in sackcloth; we see them killed and lying unburied for three days and a half; and then we see them again revived, rising upon the wings of victory, and soaring into heaven. By the few verses that follow, it appears to me impossible not to place the death and resurrection of the witnesses at the time of the Reformation. Im-

^b April 24.

^c December, Newton, vol. ii. p. 236.

mediately after they arose, in the very face of their enemies,, "there was a great earthquake;" the whole church suffered a convulsion; "and "the tenth part of the city fell." Whatever this may be designed to mean, we are, I think, given to understand, that the community of Christians was divided, and one part separated from the other: "and in the earthquake were slain of "men seven thousand." Seven being a large and complete but undefined number, (see Woodhouse, p. 10.) means here the great destruction of men which should take place; "and the "remnant were affrighted, and gave glory to the "God of heaven." These things certainly took place at the Reformation; and what is very remarkable, the remnant not only of Protestants, but of the Papists also, reformed many abuses.

Here then ends the second woe, and the third immediately succeeds: "the second woe is past; "*and*, behold, the third woe cometh quickly."

But notwithstanding the approach of the third woe, a song of triumph is heard in heaven, giving glory to God, because he has vindicated his power, and manifested himself the King of heaven and earth; truly applicable, I trust, to such an event as a restoration of his church to his pure worship.

The last verse also plainly shews, that not

only the second woe ended at the Reformation, but that the third began at the same time ; for it tells us, that “ the temple of God was opened “ in heaven, and there was seen in his temple “ the ark of his testament ; ” the temple which was before measured is now thrown open, and the Gospel, which was before confined but to a few, is now accessible to all : but this glorious exhibition is followed by the woe ; for the light flashes differently in the eyes of different men ; dissensions and schisms, heresies and separatism with all their tribe of evils, even to philosophism and infidelity, were soon to follow ; threatenings also and convulsions of the true church, and great destruction, were in train ; for “ there were lightnings, and voices, and thunders, and an earthquake, and great hail.”

REVELATION. CHAP. XII.

OF THE GREAT RED DRAGON, AND WOMAN IN THE WILDERNESS.

THE twelfth chapter of the Apocalypse I consider as the most difficult, because I feel so entirely left to myself as to its final application. Commentators widely differ in the explanation of its symbols, and yet agree in applying the whole to the depression of the Christian church in the west for the space of 1260 years, making this period of the woman to synchronise with that of the witnesses. They seem to set out determined upon the result, and explain the symbols accordingly. I think, however, that we ought first clearly to determine the meaning of the symbols, be they what they may, and from thence gather the result.

There are four principal personages introduced in this chapter, who have not before made their appearance; the woman, the child, the dragon, and Michael the archangel. For the character of Michael, I shall adopt Bishop Horsley's interpretation, who shews that Michael the archangel is no other than Jesus Christ himself. In this character I shall consider him; at the same time observing, that it

makes no difference whether Jesus Christ acts in his own person, or in that of his minister.

The dragon has been considered by Bishop Newton as representing the heathen Roman emperors, and particularly Galerius. Dr. Woodhouse has well pointed out the fallacy of this, and I think the ninth verse of this chapter is decisive; "And the great dragon was cast out, that *old serpent* called the Devil, and Satan, which deceiveth the whole world." He is then in plain terms the devil, the serpent who was to bruise the heel of the woman's seed, clad indeed in the paraphernalia of Rome, and acting through the Roman powers as his agents^k.

The child is the next symbol of which I shall take notice. This Bishop Newton applies to Constantine; but from what will hereafter appear concerning Constantine, I can by no means concede this point; and have no hesitation in agreeing with the Dean that this must be the Messiah, Jesus Christ. I am decided in this opinion by the fifth verse, which says, "And she brought forth a man-child, who was to rule all nations with a rod of iron^l:" this being a distinction, I think solely and indivi-

^k I have said no more of the dragon in this chapter than what suits my present purpose, because so much more must be said hereafter.

^l Ps. ii. 9. Rev. ii. 27; xix. 15.

dually applied in Scripture to our Lord himself.

This point being ascertained, we shall be the better enabled to decide upon the meaning of the last symbol, the woman. I have placed her last for consideration, though she stands first in the chapter, because I think with her is the greatest difficulty; and the former symbols being rightly explained, will throw much light upon her character. I believe it is universally agreed amongst commentators, that the woman represents the church; the Christian church, according to Bishop Newton, for the Christian church produced the male-child Constantine. This very well coincides with his plan; but as I conceive the Messiah to be the child, it will not answer. Can the Christian church be said to bring forth Christ? Can the Christian church be the mother of its author? Dr. Woodhouse seems to be aware of this difficulty; and he considers her as the emblem of God's church, including, as it seems, both dispensations: but in this I think he is not quite accurate. The Messiah was born in the Jewish church only, under the Jewish dispensation; the woman then, in her first appearance at least, must represent that church solely: we see her also arrayed in a glorious manner, like a church triumphant, which the Jewish church then was,

which, the Christian church never has yet been; its divine Author condescended to come amongst us in a state of humiliation; in a state militant, at least, if not of humiliation, the Christian church has ever since remained: we see her clad indeed with truth, righteousness, and peace, but she is also armed with the shield of faith, the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit. The woman appears clothed with the light of truth, represented by the sun, having the religion of nature, which borrows its feeble light from the rays of the sun under her feet; and wearing the sacerdotal crown, ornamented with the emblems of the twelve patriarchs upon her head; the whole in allusion, I presume, to Joseph's dream^m. This is the glorious appearance of God's church under the Jewish dispensation. But when the Christian church shall triumph, we are told by Isaiah, "the light of the moon shall be as the light of the sun, and the light of the sun shall be seven-fold, as the light of seven days, in the day that the Lord bindeth up the breach of his people, and healeth the stroke of their woundⁿ." And again we are told by the same prophet, "The sun shall be no more thy light by day; neither for brightness shall the moon

^m Gen. xxxvii. 9.

ⁿ Isa. xxx. 26.

“ give light unto thee ; but the Lord shall be
 “ unto thee an everlasting light, and thy God
 “ thy glory. Thy sun shall no more go down ;
 “ neither shall thy moon withdraw itself : for
 “ the Lord shall be thine everlasting light, and
 “ the days of thy mourning shall be ended°.”

The next we see of the woman is after the birth of the child, stripped of her gorgeous apparel, in a state of humiliation, fleeing into the wilderness : she may now then represent God’s church under either dispensation, or both ; but it will be well to ascertain this point more accurately. This is the first place in the Apocalypse where a woman, though a favourite figure in Scripture, is brought to represent God’s church ; it is also the first time that the Jewish dispensation is hinted at by St. John. God’s church was certainly in the Jewish dispensation till the birth of the Messiah ; afterwards the true church was the Christian : this emblem then can embrace only so much of the Christian church as contains the peculiar part of the Jewish, the holy city, and the pleasant land ; or, in other words, the eastern part of the Christian church ; that part which falls under the dominion of the little horn of the he-goat, whose fortunes had been delineated by the prophet Daniel. That St.

° Isa. lx. 19.

John means to make this distinction, I think is evident from the 16th verse, where he says, "And the earth helped the woman." The earth, the figure by which he has hitherto represented the church: the woman and the earth must be distinct, for we cannot well say that the church helped the church, but that one part might help the other is plain. The period then in the wilderness of 1260 years is to be dated from the establishment of Mahometan imposture, which I have already shewn to have taken place in the year 630, and synchronises therefore with the taking away of the daily sacrifice. Another remarkable thing also appears, "she was to be fed and nourished;" the germ of her religion was to be kept alive, not to flourish, for the space of 1260 years; and we find that the vital spark both of Judaism and Christianity is preserved in the Mahometan creed, which admits the divinity of the missions both of Moses and Christ.

If I have now rightly explained these symbols, the difficulty I conceive has vanished, and we shall be at no loss to understand the transactions pointed out in this chapter. The Jewish church appears in full splendour, about to produce the promised seed, the great Messiah; the dragon watches the birth, that he may immediately destroy the holy child; the child is

born, and is miraculously preserved : the child Jesus was saved from the blood-thirsty Herod by the immediate providence of God, who forewarned Joseph in a dream to flee with the child and his mother Mary into Egypt.

The woman it is said flies into the wilderness ; the circumstance is but barely mentioned here, to be more fully told at the end of the chapter, after other transactions which must first take place.

We are then told of the conflict between Michael and the dragon, that is, between our Saviour and the powers of darkness : literally, between the rising church and her persecuting enemies, and illustrated by our Saviour's temptation in the wilderness : the consequence of which was, to use our Saviour's own expression, " He saw Satan like lightning fall from " heaven." The devil was now dispossessed of that supreme power, which he had hitherto held over the minds and bodies of men ; he was driven from his lofty seat, though he was still suffered to molest the church for a short time. He is confined to his machinations against the church, and he immediately begins his operations by persecution and seduction ; he succeeds so far as to drive the woman into the wilderness, and in great measure to corrupt the remnant of the church. The wilderness is a

place of desolation, and also protection^p; the Christian faith was made sufficiently desolate by the Mahometan apostacy, but is still protected, as I before observed, in their very creed^q.

As the woman retired into the wilderness^r, “the serpent cast out of his mouth water as a flood, after the woman, that he might cause her to be carried away of the flood. And the earth helped the woman, and the earth opened her mouth, and swallowed up the flood, which the dragon cast out of his mouth.” In the explanation of these two verses there is some difficulty, and has been much confusion; the confusion has arisen from not keeping the true meaning of the symbols distinct and their actions appropriate; the difficulty is in affixing the true meaning of the water from the dragon’s mouth.

Now what is meant by the water? Peoples

^p Psal. cvii. 4. Joel ii. 3. Exod. xxxiv. 25.

^q Professor White, speaking of the Koran, says, “Its materials are wholly borrowed from the Jewish and Christian Scriptures, from the Talmudical legends, and apocryphal Gospels then current in the east, and from the traditions and fables which abounded in Arabia.” The materials collected from these several sources are here heaped together, with perpetual and needless repetitions, without any settled principle or visible connection. Bampton Lect. p. 264.

^r Ver. 15.

and nations, says Newton: and he applies it to the irruption of the barbarous heathen nations, which took place in the year 408. Overwhelming calamity is understood by Dean Woodhouse, which he conceives had oppressed the church under the Roman emperors. Both these interpretations are applicable, but I think not sufficiently decisive; we must look for something more in a flood which comes from the devil's mouth to overwhelm the church, something of a spiritual nature; such as false doctrines, and corruptions of religious purity; such as heathenism, gnosticism, and the like productions of other philosophical schools.

The symbols being thus stated, let us consider them together, with their several transactions. The woman is the Jewish church of God. The Jewish church is confined to the land of Judæa and the holy city. When her holy city is destroyed, her sacred altars are overthrown; and the dispensation of God's church withdrawn from her, she represents only the country of Judæa, and is in a state of persecution from the dragon. The earth is now the church of God, and helps the woman, by converting her inhabitants, by raising a Christian church upon the site of her ruins, and thus giving her access to God through the church of Jerusalem. This is what I conceive is meant

by the earth helping the woman. If it is supposed that the earth helped the woman by swallowing up the flood, I must candidly own, that I can neither explain it, nor understand it. But let us go to the sacred text: ver. 13. "And
 " when the dragon saw that he was cast unto
 " the earth, he persecuted the woman which
 " brought forth the man *child*. And to the
 " woman were given two wings of a great eagle,
 " that she might fly into the wilderness." Whilst she had still the appearance of God's church after the birth of the child, the dragon commences his persecutions through his agents the Romans, who stripped her of her outward, boasted appearance of God's church by the demolition of her city and temple, and caused her to take her first step towards the wilderness. Ver. 15. " And the serpent cast out of
 " his mouth water as a flood after the woman,
 " that he might cause her to be carried away of
 " the flood." These verses contain two transactions between the dragon and the woman, his persecution, and his endeavour to overwhelm her with a flood. The next verse contains two transactions of the earth, one of which only, I conceive, regards the woman; " And the
 " earth helped the woman." When? in the time of her distress, when she was persecuted by the dragon and his agents the Romans? and in

the manner, I conceive, which I have already pointed out, that is, by her conversion? had the earth helped the woman by swallowing up the flood, it would have been expressed differently, and would have stood thus;—and the earth helped the woman, and opened her mouth, and swallowed up the flood;—but the word earth being twice expressed, gives to my comprehension two different transactions; the one regarding the woman, the other herself: she helped the woman by taking her under the shadow of her wings, but she herself partook of the poison which flowed from the dragon's mouth.

This again exactly agrees with what I have advanced in my explanation of the first woe; corruptions first broke out from the bottomless pit, or devil's mouth, and darkened with their smoke the eastern hemisphere, and in due time burst in upon the western, preparing the one for Mussulman apostacy, and the other for the dreadful woes inflicted on the western church. This also appears again in the next verse, 17. “And
 “the dragon was wroth with the woman, and
 “went to make war with the remnant of her seed,
 “which keep the commandments of God, and
 “have the testimony of Jesus Christ.” The dragon having to the utmost of his power, and with too much success, annoyed and corrupted the eastern church, turns his attention to the

western, where the commandments of God were still obeyed in the comparative purity.

The prominent features of this chapter in few words are these: during the prosperity of the Jewish church, she is about to produce the promised Messiah; as he is to be the declared foe of the serpent, the devil watches his birth, that he may if possible destroy him at his first coming; the child is born, and Herod, through the subtilty of the devil, seeks to entrap him; he is preserved by the immediate interference of Providence: when come to man's estate, a conflict for superiority ensues between the Saviour and the serpent; the devil is foiled, but is still permitted to make his attempts upon the church; he immediately sets about it with persecution and seduction; he succeeds so far as for a certain time to drive one part into apostacy, and to sink the other in corruption; but a spark of Christian vitality is kept alive in the former, and a pure though small community of Christian faith retained in the latter: the sacred fire will at length kindle and blaze out in a pure, and a bright, and inextinguishable flame, when we shall see the rider upon his white horse returning, conquering and having conquered*.

* If I have considered the woman in the wilderness in too restricted a sense, (as I have confined her to the Jewish converts only,) it is for the sake of shewing how intimately the

It may be asked, why did St. John introduce the eastern church in this place so particularly? I conceive it to be, to shew the connection between his prophecy and Daniel's, and to mark the division between the two churches: this we shall find of peculiar use in what follows.

Jewish dispensation is connected with the Christian, how St. John passes from the one to the other by considering the Jewish church at Jerusalem as becoming the metropolis of the Christian church in the east; but I would have the matter also taken in a more enlarged view, comprehending the whole dispersion of the Jewish nation; this dispersion was begun by the Romans in the destruction of Jerusalem and her temple, but whilst a Christian church was permitted to remain there, whilst the true and only God of Israel, whom the Jews adored, was still worshipped upon the hill of Sion, that shining light cheered the hopes of the disconsolate Jew, and kept alive a faint expectation of future good; but when this lamp of God went out in the temple of the Lord, where the ark of God was, by Mahometan arms and Mussulman faith, the gates of the wilderness were finally closed upon him, and he had to wander his appointed period without the cloud to cover him by day, or the pillar of fire to enlighten him by night.

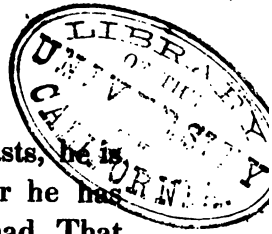
REVELATION. CHAP. XIII.

§. 1. OF THE FIRST BEAST, THAT ROSE OUT OF THE SEA.

ST. JOHN has now given us an account of the disasters, and two particular woes, which should afflict the Christian church; he has given us a short sketch of the Jewish Christian church to the end, and now confines himself to the western; and shews us under what powers those woes are to take place.

The dragon had lost his high place of power, and could no longer appear himself as the principal agent, for the devil in his proper colours could not be tolerated by Christians: he therefore substitutes an agent through whom the incense of his votaries should be conveyed. Accordingly the prophet sees a beast rising from the sea, that is, from the Gentiles: he partakes of the nature of Daniel's four beasts; he has the lion's mouth of the first; the bear's feet of the second; like the third he resembles a leopard; and has the ten horns of the fourth; but he is also diverse from them, for he has seven heads, and these heads are of a religious nature, for they are marked with blasphemy.

We may observe, that though this beast par-



takes of the nature of all Daniel's beasts, ~~he is~~ not exclusively any one of them, for he has seven heads, which none of Daniel's had. That the beast is Roman, there can be no doubt, the ten horns declare it; but I must insist upon it, that these heads marked with blasphemy portray Christian and not Pagan Rome. It may be remembered that Daniel saw another power rising amongst the Pagan powers of Rome, a little horn rising amongst the ten; and it is observable that Daniel saw only two marks of distinction in this little horn, viz. "eyes like the eyes of a man, and a mouth speaking great things." He did but just see the outline of this power, which was but for a short time to be connected with that line of prophecy which he was to pursue, and describes only those characters which should complete his fourth beast; he sees him therefore as it were through a glass darkly; but the angel afterwards explains him according to Daniel's vision, that we might see and know him to be the power which St. John should hereafter see in the shape of a beast rising from the sea.

But that I may the more distinctly explain my own views of this beast, it may be well to state (clearly if possible) the views of Newton, and others who have gone before him, or who have too inconsiderately followed in his steps.

“A beast,” says Newton, “in the prophetic style, is a tyrannical idolatrous empire.” This is not exactly as I should have defined it, but he must abide by its consequences: “no doubt is to be made,” he proceeds, “that this beast was designed to represent the Roman empire; for thus far both ancients and moderns, papists and protestants, are agreed: the only doubt or controversy is, whether it was Rome Pagan or Christian, imperial or papal, which may perhaps be fully and clearly determined in the sequel. St. John saw the beast rising out of the sea, but the Roman empire was risen and established long before St. John’s time; and therefore this *must be* the Roman empire, *not in its present, but in some future shape and form, after* it was broken to pieces by the incursions of the northern nations.” In the sequel here we find, that this beast *must* represent *Rome Christian ONLY*. He goes on; “The beast hath seven heads and ten horns, which are the well known marks and signals of the Roman empire, the seven heads alluding to the seven mountains whereon Rome was situated, and to the seven forms of government which successively prevailed there^a.” Here we find, ac-

^a It is curious here to observe, that Bishop Newton should go so far back as republican Rome for heads, thus making

cording to the Bishop's interpretation of the heads, that the beast represents *also* pagan Rome: "And the ten horns signifying the ten kingdoms into which the Roman empire was divided;" here again the beast represents Christian Rome by the same interpreter. From these vague and contradictory notions, I do not see what conclusion can be drawn, whether this beast be Pagan or Christian, or both.

In regard to the second point, whether the beast be imperial or papal, the Bishop has given us no proof, but has left us to guess; for after introducing Daniel's fourth beast, and shewing us the similarity between the two, he says, "And consequently this must be the same as Daniel's fourth beast, or the Roman empire:" but still, he says, it is not the same beast, the same empire, entirely, but with some variations; "and the dragon gave him his power, or his armies, and his seat, or his imperial throne, and great authority or jurisdiction over all parts of his empire: the beast then," he concludes, "is the successor and substitute of the dragon, or of the idolatrous heathen Roman empire." In this conclusion I perfectly agree, and according to this, the beast is *imperial*: but this does not serve the Bishop's turn, but he proceeds to ask,

St. John's vision retrospective, which he would not allow in the case of the white horse.

“ And what other idolatrous power hath succeeded to the heathen emperors in Rome, all the world is a judge and a witness.” What he means by the word *other*, we are left to guess ; but his lordship has taken care to direct our imaginations to the point at which he aims, by introducing *papal* Rome in the preceding page, by slipping in the worship of saints and angels in this page, and in the next by unhesitatingly declaring, and by distinctly shewing, that the beast perfectly resembles the little horn of Daniel : as he has before laboured much to prove that the little horn of Daniel is solely *papal*, he here assumes that this beast is the *papal* power also, in the teeth of his own immediate assumption that he is *imperial* ; in the teeth of his own definition, that “ a beast in the prophetic style is a tyrannical idolatrous *empire* ;” and against his better knowledge, that the *papal* and *imperial* powers were never united in the Bishop of Rome : he must be aware, that though the power of the church grew up, and increased, and flourished under the auspices of *imperial* sway, yet that upon the establishment of the *popedom*, the *empire* and the church, though united in interest, and mutually supporting each other, were for ever separate, and often adverse in power : the *popedom* never was *imperial*. I am the more earnest in this place, because it is the point in which the

greatest number of commentators are most agreed, and because it has been the occasion of so much confusion and misconception.

Dean Woodhouse has taken a different view of this beast, but I am persuaded that he has not considered him with his usual acumen; he has blended the first and second beasts of St. John together, and in this state has compared them, with the whole fourth beast of Daniel, including the little horn; by these means he throws no light upon the subject, a subject which particularly requires to be carefully separated and minutely sifted in all its parts; he does not seem aware that he gives the period of 1260 years to the whole beast of Daniel, whereas it most distinctly attaches to the little horn only; nor does he seem to think it necessary that it should attach to one beast only, though they are decidedly distinct in their place, their time, and their character. Newton therefore is perfectly right in determining this first beast of St. John to be the little horn of Daniel's fourth beast; he only errs in the application of them both to the papal power. And his error arises from a feeling common with all his protestant predecessors, a too great promptitude to charge upon the Roman pontiff all the follies and corruptions with which the Christian church was infected. Whereas in point of fact the

popedom itself arose out of those very corruptions which had been for ages growing, even from the times of the Apostles themselves. Since then this beast and the little horn are confessedly the same, that is, symbolising the same thing, let us lay aside prejudice, and fairly examine, whether there be not another power, which will distinctly and minutely agree with both conjointly and separately.

I have reserved the examination of the little horn for this place^h, because I conceive him to be so intimately connected with this beast, and was content to pass over for a time the consideration of Newton's hypothesis, when I wanted to compare him with the little horn of the goat. But it is now time to enquire who and what is symbolised by the little horn of the beast. He arises amongst the ten, he roots up three of the ten, and he is diverse not only from the three foregoing beasts, but from the beast upon which, and from the ten horns amongst which, he arises; this diversity I have already shewn to be of a religious nature, and I have already shewn also that the four beasts and the ten horns were pagan, and therefore I conclude that this little horn is Christian: a Christian power rising up amongst the ten last pagan emperors of Rome.

^h See p. 30.

Let us now examine when the Christian church began to rise into power. I believe it is a well-known and acknowledged fact, that the church during the three first centuries, however much she increased throughout the wide extended dominion of the Cæsars, however conversant she was in senates and armies, amongst philosophers and men of learning, and even sometimes nurtured and cherished in the very courts and palaces of princes, yet never exhibited one instance of political power, nor ever arrested the arm of her furious and persecuting enemies: but in the very beginning of the fourth century, we see her rising with increased strength out of the fire of persecution, and speedily forcing her way to the most extensive power.

It directly meets our purpose to enquire how this was effected—how this was effected by human means. Let it be observed, that Constantius was no sooner raised to the purple, than he shewed himself to be the friend, the favourer, the protector of the Christians. Even throughout the bitterest and most determined persecution which they had ever experienced, they were in his provinces, and in his armies, in comparative safety and security. This gained him the love not only of his people in general, but of his soldiers in particular; and it is fair to conclude from hence, that at least the greater part of

his soldiers were Christians. This then I consider as the first step which the Christian church advanced in the road of political power; here was that power born and nursed, which soon after exerted itself so successfully not only in placing the son of their beloved commander upon the throne, but also in raising him to the *sole* administration of the empire. From this time the growing power of the church and the increasing authority of Constantine were interwoven and united in one and the same indivisible interests. The power of the church could never have risen without Constantine; and Constantine would never have obtained the purple without the aid of the church. Here then we see the church rising amongst the ten horns, rising in one of them, and constituting his very power.

We will now attend to the steps of Constantine towards power, always keeping in mind, that Constantine and the church are inseparable, and that though he was a Christian hero, he was a pagan emperor.

In the year 292, the very year in which his father Constantius obtained the imperial dignity, Constantine set out for Egypt to join the Roman army stationed in that quarter, this being the most direct, and almost the only road to distinction and command; here he very early

distinguished himself, and was quickly raised to the command of military tribune ; being sent for to attend his dying father in the year 306, he arrived in time to close his parent's eyes, and to be saluted emperor by his devoted army: victory now succeeded victory, and no check was put to his career, till having subdued and rooted out *three* of the remaining emperors, he became sole master of the Roman world. It certainly was not designed by the imperial tyrants, that the Christian church should obtain power, for she was at this time suffering under the Dioclesian persecution ; nor was it intended that Constantine should partake of empire, for he was way-laid by Galerius in his journey to his father ; but in spite of persecution, the church raised her head in the western provinces, and in defiance of Galerius, Constantine assumed the imperial purple. Let us attend to Mr. Gibbon's account of this remarkable transaction.

“The death of Constantius,” says this author, “was immediately succeeded by the elevation of Constantine. The ideas of inheritance and succession are so very familiar, that the generality of mankind consider them as founded, not only in reason, but in nature itself. Our imagination readily transfers the same principles from private property to public dominion ; and whenever a virtuous father leaves behind

“ him a son whose merit seems to justify the
 “ esteem, or even the hopes of the people, the
 “ joint influence of prejudice and of affection
 “ operates with irresistible weight. The flower
 “ of the western armies had followed Constan-
 “ tius into Britain, and the national troops were
 “ reinforced by a numerous body of Alemanni,
 “ who obeyed the orders of Crocus, one of their
 “ hereditary chieftains. The opinion of their
 “ own importance, and the assurance that Bri-
 “ tain, Gaul, and Spain, would acquiesce in
 “ their nomination, were *diligently inculcated*
 “ to the legions by the *adherents* of *Constantine*.
 “ The soldiers were asked, whether they would
 “ hesitate a moment between the honour of
 “ placing at their head the worthy son of their
 “ beloved emperor, and the ignominy of tamely
 “ expecting the arrival of some obscure stranger,
 “ on whom it might please the sovereign of
 “ Asia to bestow the armies and provinces of
 “ the West. It was *insinuated* to them, that
 “ gratitude and liberality held a distinguished
 “ place among the virtues of Constantine ; nor
 “ did that artful prince shew himself to the
 “ troops, till they were prepared to salute him
 “ with the names of Augustus and Emperor.
 “ The throne was the object of his desires, and
 “ had he been less actuated by ambition, it was
 “ his only means of safety. He was well ac-

“ acquainted with the character and sentiments
 “ of Galerius, and sufficiently apprised, that if
 “ he wished to live, he must determine to reign.
 “ The *decent*, and even *obstinate, resistance*
 “ which he *chose to affect*, was *contrived to jus-*
 “ *tify his usurpation*; nor did he yield to the
 “ acclamations of the army, till he had provided
 “ the proper materials for a letter, which he im-
 “ mediately dispatched to the Emperor of the
 “ East. Constantine informed him of the me-
 “ lancholy event of his father’s death, modestly
 “ asserted his natural claim to the succession,
 “ and respectfully lamented, that the affec-
 “ tionate violence of his troops had not per-
 “ mitted him to solicit the imperial purple in the
 “ *regular and constitutional manner*. The first
 “ emotions of Galerius were those of *surprise*,
 “ *disappointment*, and *rage*; and as he could
 “ seldom restrain his passions, he loudly threat-
 “ ened that he would commit to the flames both
 “ the letter and the messenger. But his resent-
 “ ment insensibly subsided; and when he re-
 “ collected the doubtful chance of war, when
 “ he had weighed the character and strength of
 “ his adversary, he consented to embrace the
 “ honourable accommodation which the pru-
 “ dence of Constantine had left open to him.
 “ Without either condemning or ratifying the
 “ choice of the British army, Galerius accepted

“ the son of his deceased colleague as the sove-
 “ reign of the provinces beyond the Alps ; but
 “ he gave him *only the title of Cæsar*, and the
 “ *fourth rank* among the Roman princes, whilst
 “ he conferred the vacant place of Augustus on
 “ his favourite Severus. The apparent harmony
 “ of the empire was still preserved, and Con-
 “ stantine, who already possessed the sub-
 “ stance, expected, without impatience, an op-
 “ portunity of obtaining the honours of supreme
 “ power .”

More might be extracted from Gibbon, but I
 have quoted enough to shew, how little it was
 designed by those in power that Constantine
 should assume the place which he did assume,
 or that he should be raised to that pinnacle of
 power which he afterwards did attain.

Thus did the little horn arise amongst the
 others by the elevation of Constantine, who
 himself made one of the ten emperors within the
 Dioclesian period. I do not conceive it neces-
 sary that the ten should be co-existent emperors
 at one and the same time : it seems to me suffi-
 cient that they were upon the same stage, rising
 into power, as Constantine the last began to do
 in the year 292, when Dioclesian the first was
 in full power : thus including the whole impe-

* Gibbon, vol. ii. 4to. vol. iii. 8vo.

rial power of the Roman beast in that period shared amongst them in a greater or less degree. I have given this period its full extent, but it may be observed, that Constantine was co-emperor with Maximian, Galerius, Severus, Maximin, Maxentius, and Licinius ; that he immediately succeeded his father Constantius, was elevated to the throne fifteen months from the abdication of Dioclesian during his life, and twelve years from the death of Carausius. And it may be further observed, that of these, Dioclesian, Galerius, and Constantius died natural deaths : Carausius fell under Constantius, Severus under Maximian, and Maximin under Licinius ; but Constantine overthrew Maximian, Maxentius, and Licinius : by the rooting out of these three last horns, the power of the church was established with Constantine at its head. If it be again objected, that the little horn cannot be one of the ten ; I answer, that the little horn is the civil and religious power united in Constantine, rising up with him and in him, rather than the man himself. As a Pagan emperor, Constantine is one of the ten ; united with the church as a Christian, he is the little horn. That he was so united, there can be no dispute ; and that he was the former, and at the head of the church, I will proceed to shew. " And the ten horns out of this kingdom" (ac-

cording to the interpretation given to Daniel ^d)
 “are ten kings *that* shall arise : and another
 “shall rise after them ; and he shall be diverse
 “from the first.” In this diversity Constantine
 was eminently conspicuous ; he was sole sovereign,
 not only in the military, civil, and political
 departments of the empire, but he was also head
 of the Christian church ; he was at one and the
 same time the champion of Christianity, and the
 high priest of Jupiter. It is true, he was a convert
 to Christianity, and established the church of Christ
 throughout the empire ; but he also respected and
 enjoined the rites of the heathen deities. “In the
 year 321,” says Gibbon ^e, “Constantine published two
 edicts, the first of which enjoined the solemn
 observance of Sunday, and the second directed the
 regular consultation of the Aruspices.” “Again,” says
 the same author in a note ^f, “the panegyric of Eumenius,
 which was pronounced a few months before the Italian
 war, abounds with the most unexceptionable evidence
 of the Pagan superstition of Constantine, and of his
 particular veneration for Apollo, or the sun.” Here
 then is another strong and decided mark of the little
 horn in his *diversity* from the others, consisting

^d Dan. vii. 24.

^e Vol. ii. p. 181. 4to ; vol. iii. p. 241. 8vo.

^f Vol. ii. p. 183. note 12. 4to ; vol. iii. p. 243. 8vo.

in his mixture of heathenism with Christianity : and in testimony of the ecclesiastical tyranny which he established and supported, we have only to refer to the same author for evidences, which he produced for far different purposes than the establishment of Christian truth: “ The edict of Milan,” says he^s, “ the great charter of toleration, had confirmed to each individual of the Roman world the privilege of choosing and professing his own religion. But this inestimable privilege was soon violated ; with the knowledge of truth the Emperor imbibed the maxims of persecution, and the sects which dissented from the Catholic church were afflicted or oppressed by the triumph of Christianity.” In the same page he goes on ; “ but as the sectaries might still exist under the clouds of royal disgrace, the conquest of the East was immediately followed by an edict, which announced their total destruction.” Passages in abundance might be taken from this valuable author, but I shall content myself with only two more upon this subject ; one of which will shew, that the ecclesiastical tyranny he established was handed down by him with his sovereignty to his successors ; the other, that he acted at last on his

own sole authority ^h. “ But as those princes
 “ (Constantine and his sons) presumed to extend
 “ their despotism over the faith, as well as over
 “ the lives and fortunes of their subjects, the
 “ weight of their suffrage sometimes inclined the
 “ ecclesiastical balance: and the prerogatives of
 “ the King of heaven were settled, or changed,
 “ or modified, in the cabinet of an earthly mo-
 “ narch.” Again, “ ⁱ In the year 335 Constan-
 “ tine issued an absolute command that Arius
 “ should be solemnly admitted to the commu-
 “ nion in the cathedral of Constantinople.”
 Thus we see this little horn speaking great
 words against the Most High, and wearing out
 the ^k saints of the Most High, and thinking to
 change times and laws.

But though this imperial ecclesiastical tyranny
 was thus established, and did by the aid of a
 powerful coadjutor remain firmly established
 for many centuries ; yet we read, that his do-
 minion over the saints was to be taken away
 after a time, and times, and the dividing of time :
 that is, according to our best commentators,
 1260 years.

We have now gained a date for the begin-

^h Vol. iii. p. 345. 8vo. vol. ii. p. 260. 4to.

ⁱ Vol. iii. p. 348. 8vo. vol. ii. p. 263. 4to.

^k The people of God, the true church, Psal. cxlviii. 14.
 cxlix. 5.

ning of the rise of the little horn in the year 292, when Constantine first departed for the army, and Constantius began to nurse the church. This imperial ecclesiastical tyranny symbolized by the little horn, thus arising and being thus established in Constantine, it only remains to shew that it retained its power over the saints exactly 1260 years, and this appears to be the case by the corresponding date of the beginning of the Reformation, for the horn's rise took place in 292, and the protestant religion was first recognized by the treaty of Passau in 1552¹.

Now since we have made out who and what the little horn of Daniel is, it becomes full time to turn our attention to the beast of St. John, always bearing in mind, that as Daniel saw the Roman beast in his Pagan state, the religious characteristic mark of the little horn savours more of Paganism than Christianity: and as St. John, on the other hand, saw his beast in his Christian state, his corresponding mark bears relation to the true religion rather than to the false; and what may be human wisdom in the

¹ It is remarkable, that Mr. Gibbon considers the fall of the Roman empire to be completed in the sixteenth century; for he brings his history of its decline and fall down to the pontificate of Sixtus V. that is, into the year 1585; thus making an exact period of 1260 years between its end and the council of Nice.

one, may be corruption in the other: thus the little horn of Daniel was marked with the eyes like the eyes of a man: and the beast of St. John with blasphemy.

The eyes portray the understanding, as it is often expressed in Scripture^m; but they are the eyes of a man, that is, human understanding, or human learning and philosophy, which very plainly accords with my explanation of the first woe. Daniel says of the little hornⁿ of his fourth beast, “ And he shall speak *great* words against “ the Most High, and shall wear out the saints “ of the Most High, and think to change times “ and laws: and they shall be given into his “ hand until a time, and times, and the dividing “ of time.” These are almost the same words which St. John afterwards uses in the description of his first beast; “ ° And there was given “ unto him a mouth speaking great things, and “ blasphemies;” here blasphemy is added; “ and power was given unto him to continue “ forty *and* two months. And he opened his “ mouth in blasphemy against God, to blas- “ pheme his name, and them that dwell in hea- “ ven. And it was given unto him to make “ war with the saints, and to overcome them: “ and power was given him over all kindreds,

^m Matt. vi. 22. Eph. i. 18. ⁿ Dan. vii. 25. ° Ver. 5, 6, 7.

“ and tongues, and nations.” Can we then doubt that this beast and the little horn are one and the same? As I have already shewn who the little horn was, I will leave it to the sense of my reader to observe the close connection, and determine for this beast also. The consolidation and establishment of ecclesiastical and imperial tyranny under Constantine over the saints remained in force till the completion of the Reformation, a period of 1260 years^p; this also was the period of the beast. If St. John has entered more fully into the description of this beast than Daniel did into that of the little horn, it was for this reason; Daniel said what was sufficient for his own purpose, and to give a connection with St. John’s; St. John on the other hand shews his connection with Daniel by the woman in the wilderness, and takes up the little horn as the grand feature

^p “ In the long period of 1200 years, which elapsed between the reign of Constantine and the Reformation of Luther, the worship of saints and relics corrupted the pure and perfect simplicity of the Christian model; and some symptoms of degeneracy may be observed even in the first generations, which adopted and cherished this pernicious innovation.” Gibbon, vol. iii. p. 96. 4to.

“ The religion of Constantine achieved in less than a century, this final conquest of the Roman empire; but the victors themselves were insensibly subdued by the arts of their vanquished rivals.” Gibbon, vol. iii. p. 103. 4to.

in his own prophecy, remaining in the western road which Daniel had quitted for the eastern : at the same time combining what he had before said of the horses, trumpets, woes, measuring of the temple, and witnesses, into one grand whole.

Since then this beast is, as it were, the centre-piece of the whole apocalyptic vision, the key-stone of the arch, which unites the component parts, and bears the pressure of the whole fabric, it is the more important to ascertain with precision his credentials, his bearings, and his character: I trust there will remain no doubt in my reader's mind that he is the little horn of Daniel's beast; and that the little horn is the ecclesiastical imperial tyranny established by and in the great Constantine: so far I feel secure. But there are other marks and characters upon this beast, which did not appear in the little horn; for a solution of which we must consider the relative designs of the different prophets. Their principal object, as I have before stated, was to foretell the fortunes of the church, Daniel in the east, St. John in the west; but as the division into east and west did not take place till after the conversion of the empire, Daniel was obliged to introduce Constantine to complete his line of prophecy; and having introduced him, and given him such

marks as were sufficient for his purpose, he leaves him to be amplified, and extended, and enlarged upon by his brother Prophet, who should symbolize and prefigure the circumstances which were to take place in the western church.

Three ingredients, I presume, are necessary to form a prophetical beast; tyranny, idolatry or corruption, and connection with the church; now it is remarkable, that Daniel, in the description of his beasts, dwells chiefly upon their tyranny, and for this reason, as I conceive; their connection with the church was well known and acknowledged; their idolatry was to themselves, for the church was never idolatrous after the Babylonian captivity, but it was their tyrannical oppression which was so much felt and deprecated by the Jewish nation: even in the little horn, when corruptions were in the church, tyranny was most his theme, as he well knew that its corruptions would be the subject of a future prophet, and that the history of the eastern church was to be followed in another line. But St. John, whose object it was to dwell on the corruptions of the western church, is diffuse in the religious character of his beast, and traces him to the father of lies himself. He begins with the rise of Christianity springing from the Jewish church; shews us the persecution which

both the mother and her seed endured from the dragon, who, when he found them removed from the reach of destruction, corrupted them both, by an overwhelming flood of iniquity, and being permitted for a time to be in the earth, endeavoured to retrieve his lost dominion by raising up a substitute, to whom he might delegate his seat and his power, and thus retain an interest in that church, in which he himself could not openly appear; well knowing, that Christians, who would not worship him in person, might be seduced to bow the knee before the fascinating glitter of earthly power.

This beast then which rose from the sea, that is from among the Gentiles and Pagan worshippers, we may well be prepared to find in the similitude and likeness of his father, both in shape and disposition: we will examine them in both. The dragon, as I have before observed, is the serpent, the old serpent, the devil; that high spirit of heathenism, whom his Pagan votaries worshipped through their vain and fanciful deities. As the guiding spirit of Rome, he appears in Roman costume, seven heads and ten horns: the ten horns of Rome I have already proved to be the ten last Pagan emperors; and as the devil must here personate the whole Roman *Pagan* state from beginning to end, and that only; for, as I have said, he

could not in his own person represent the Christian; I conclude that the seven heads are the seven first kings, and that they are kings appears by their crowns; the crown which was never afterwards tolerated in Rome. In regard to his disposition; his tyranny is conspicuous in his persecution of the churches, both the mother and her seed; and further appears in corrupting them, when he found that he could not prevail over them by strength: and if we cannot in strictness of speech lay idolatry to his charge, being himself the object worshipped; nor blasphemy, which more properly consists in words; yet his opposition, his rage, and violence against the very throne of God, partake of the nature of them both, and far exceed them in boldness, flagitiousness, and atrocity.

Compare now with him the beast, his substitute in the church, to whom he gave his power, his seat, and great authority. The parallel is pretty exact; he also has his seven heads and ten horns; he opens his mouth in blasphemy; and it is given him to make war with the saints, and to overcome them.

In shape and disposition then the dragon and the beast are perfectly similar, and from this similarity we must not depart. The dragon is the representative of Pagan Rome, the beast of Christian; the heads and horns of the one can-

not be the heads and horns of the other, but they are similar. As then the heads of the dragon appear at the beginning of his reign, and the horns at the end, so also must the heads begin to appear at the rise of the beast, and the horns must be placed towards the end of his existence; with this distinction, that whereas the heads of the dragon were seven successive persons, the heads of the beast are so many successive dynasties, or changes in the imperial power; and this may be well allowed, because the dragon in his form principally represents the political power of Pagan Rome, which underwent several violent and fundamental changes; the first and last of which are alone mentioned. But the Christian beast chiefly represents the ecclesiastical power of Rome, which has undergone no material change in itself, but only in its administrators, and therefore may be supposed to retain his heads in succession throughout, or nearly throughout, his whole existence. Now his existence seems to extend in different modes and shapes indeed, from the conversion of the Roman empire to the second Advent; at which time he is to be taken with the false prophet, and cast into the lake of fire and brimstone. Through so long a course as this the heads must be reckoned by dynasties; for his horns, which are to appear at the end of his

reign, as we read that they are kings who shall reign one hour with the beast, that they hate the whore, and will be active in the destruction of this monster, we need not look, as the time of their appearance is not yet; and it is idle to make inconclusive conjectures as to the future: but the heads which have appeared from the beginning we are called upon to examine.

REVELATION. CHAP. XIII.^a

§. 2. OF THE INTERPRETATION OF THE SEVEN HEADS OF THE FIRST BEAST.

THIS part of the subject is extremely important, and has in my apprehension been much misunderstood. I shall therefore first make some observations upon the opinions of preceding commentators ; and Bishop Newton shall speak for them all, as I am not aware that there is any material difference amongst them : I mean in regard to the essential points, as that the dragon represents the state of Rome, and the beast the Popedom ; and that the seven heads of each allude to the seven different governments which prevailed in Rome. Differences have been made by different commentators in the relationship between the dragon and the beast, and in some other minor respects ; all endeavouring to reconcile difficulties which all have felt, but which are not to be overcome upon the hypothesis in which they acquiesced.

“ The *dragon*,” says Newton, “ represents
“ the state of Rome ; his seven heads allude to

^a Part of the xviith chapter is also referred to in this Section.

“ the seven mountains upon which Rome was
 “ built, and to the seven forms of government
 “ which successively prevailed there.” He tells
 us in the same words, “ that the seven heads
 “ of the *beast* allude to the seven mountains
 “ whereon Rome was situated, and to the seven
 “ forms of government which successively pre-
 “ vailed there.” This implies, that the heads
 of the dragon and the beast are the same. He
 afterwards tells us, that the sixth head repre-
 sents the imperial government, that this head
 received the wound in the subversion of the em-
 pire ; but that the beast revived under his se-
 venth head, or the Popedom. Now the beast
 himself has before been represented by Newton
 as the Popedom ; therefore the beast, and a part
 of the beast, are one and the same thing. But
 it may be urged that the beast existed only un-
 der one head at a time, and that under this
 seventh head only he was the Papal power. Be
 it so, then he existed under each of his heads
 severally through the whole prior existence of
 Rome, up to their very kings, and yet we see
 him rising from the sea after the dragon, who
 was confessedly the representative of Rome,
 had lost his power : and this consequence is so
 absurd, that the position need not be formally
 disproved. Again, if it be said, “ that the head
 “ is only an allusion to the ~~beast~~ ;” so truly in

the same sense is the beast an allusion to the Popedom; the head then is an allusion to the Popedom, that is, an allusion to itself. Again, if the heads of the dragon and of the beast represent the same things, how can it be reconciled with any degree of consistency, that those of the one should be with crowns, and those of the other without? Because, says Bishop Newton, a change had taken place in the *mean time*: a change had taken place in the government of Rome, which passed the power from the heads to the horns. This intermediate time, according to his interpretation, is at the fall of the Roman empire, when the imperial power was subverted by the Goths, and the empire was divided into several kingdoms; that is, between the imperial power, which the Bishop considers as the sixth head, and the papal, which he considers as the seventh; consequently, the six first heads *only* of both dragon and beast ought to have been crowned, and the seventh of neither. If again it should be said, that the dragon is the prototype of the beast, that is, the Roman state of the Popedom, then I conceive it is necessary, that the Popedom should have undergone as many and similar changes in her government as the Roman state did; but this has been by no means the case, and no two governments could be more diverse from each other,

than the Roman Pagan state and the Popedom. The attempt to bring into any degree of order or consistency these incongruities is perfectly vain, and I should but tire and exhaust the patience of my reader, as well as my own, were I to pursue them much further ; I will therefore notice but one thing more. If the heads of the dragon and the beast are the same, or, what is equivalent, if they both represent the several governments of Rome, we must be prepared to see Pagan heads upon a Christian beast ; a Christian power with consular heads adorned with regal crowns ! How can any scholar, nay, how can any man, who has read one page of Roman history, for a moment acquiesce in the crown as an emblem of consular or tribunitial, of decemviral or triumviral power ; that abomination of the Roman people, which the great Cæsar himself, in the plenitude of his power, dared not to take upon himself !

From these incongruities, I think, it must appear, that the dragon does not represent the state of Rome beyond its paganism ; that the beast does not represent the Popedom exclusively ; and that the heads of these respective symbols do not represent the same thing, or the several forms of government which prevailed in Rome. That these respective heads were symbols of the seven mountains upon which Rome

was situated, is to be allowed, for the angel has declared it; but these mountains were themselves symbols of things in pagan Rome, when applied to the dragon, and of things in Christian Rome, when applied to the beast: by making this distinction, and keeping the symbols clear of each other, we shall find no confusion or difficulty of application.

I have already shewn that the dragon is the representative of the pagan Roman state, his seven heads denoting the first seven kings, and his ten horns the last ten emperors. The beast, which denotes Christian Rome, or the union in power of a tyrannical state and a corrupted church, is a child of the dragon's own begetting; his seven heads and ten horns betray his parentage. The only difference is, as I have before stated, that the heads of the beast must be reckoned by dynasties of families or houses, and not by individuals as the heads of the dragon. The first head then must be sought in the first rise of the beast, and this was evidently in Constantine, and continued through his dynasty, which ended in the year 363, in Julian the apostate; unless we take into the account his immediate successor Jovian, a seven months' emperor, who did little more than lead back a part of the way to Rome his master's shattered army; his death took place on the road, "and the throne," says

Mr. Gibbon, "of the Roman world remained "ten days without a master." A second head now arose in Valentinian, in the year 364; he divided the empire into the east and west, bestowing the east upon his brother Valens, and reserving the west under his own sway. In his family it remained till the death of Valentinian the Second, which took place in the year 392. The empire of the west was now assumed by the great Theodosius emperor of the east, who thus became the third head, and who at his death again divided the empire, giving the east to his son Arcadius, and the west to his other son Honorius. In this dynasty it remained till the subversion of the empire in 475. From this time no western head appeared; all was anarchy and confusion, violence, ignorance, and barbarism, till the elevation of Charlemagne in the year 800. The Carlovingian dynasty retained the seat of the Cæsars, till an interregnum, according to Mr. Gibbon, of about 70 years took place; after which a fifth head arose in the Saxon family of Otho the Great, who was crowned emperor in the year 962. The line of Otho became extinct in 1254; and after another interregnum of about 18 years, the house of Austria succeeded. This dynasty, though not yet extinguished, nor perhaps likely to be, though it did indeed in our days abdicate the

western throne, and was for a time supplanted by a seventh emperor of the west. The seven heads will stand thus, and may be thus distinguished ; 1. The Roman ; 2. the Western ; 3. the Theodosian ; 4. the Carlovingian ; 5. the Saxon ; 6. the Austrian ; 7. the Corsican. Concerning the two last, I am not disposed to contend : the recency of their transactions would make a too positive decision savour of presumption ; but if they bear the legitimate marks of genuine heads, of which I shall have something to advance hereafter, I may feel little doubt, though I forbear to determine.

In regard to the three first, there seems to be sufficient demonstration, that Constantine united in himself the jurisdiction of the Christian church, and the majesty of the Roman empire ; the only question is, whether the power in church and state thus united, formed the apocalyptic beast of St. John ; and this I trust I have already proved, and therefore the Roman emperor must be the head of the beast. Whilst this state of things continued, the government descending from father to son, or from heir to heir, so long did the first head remain entire ; but when that family became extinct, and a new one was raised to the imperial purple, under circumstances too of a great political change, a change of no less magnitude than the division of the

Roman empire into east and west, we must perforce look out for a new western head. Again, when this second head fell by the death of Valentinian II. a second change occurred by the reunion of the empire under the great Theodosius, who assumed the western power, and planted his dynasty on the western throne, and thus became the third head of the western empire : and this head continued till the fall of Rome. Here let us pause.

And let us now consider another remarkable trait in this beast^b: "And I saw one of his heads as it were wounded to death ; and his deadly wound was healed." Here a mistake may arise in the sense of this passage, and has arisen, by the wrong application of the pronoun *his* ; the question is, does the latter pronoun *his* relate to the head, or to the beast ? Newton says, to the head ; he could do no otherwise, for as he makes the subversion of the Roman empire to be the wound given, it must be one of the six heads which preceded his beast, for his beast was not at that time arisen. To reconcile these inconsistencies is not in my power, and I must have recourse to a different interpretation. Now happily the same circumstance is mentioned in two other places of the same chapter,

^b Ch. xiii. 3.

and in words so decisive, as to leave little room for a question to arise: "And causeth the earth
 "and them which dwell therein to worship the
 "first beast, whose deadly wound was healed^c."
 "That they should make an image to the beast,
 "which had the wound by a sword, and did
 "live^d." It is the beast then that is smitten almost to death by the wound of the sword in one of his heads; it is the beast who is healed, and not his head; it is the beast who revives, not by the healing of the wounded head, but by the rise and vigour of another, as we shall presently see. I am happy now to agree with Bishop Newton, that the deadly wound, given to the beast, was at the subversion of the Roman empire; the sword denotes it; it is only upon some great occasion that the sword is used as an emblem by the prophet. Julian, it is true, died of wounds received in battle, but there was nothing extraordinary in this: the second Valentinian also met his death at the hands of murderers: but it is not the fall of an individual, nor the assassination of a prince, which will alone give a sufficient dignity to the emblem of the sword; something more is required, something of higher interest, something which deeply affects the welfare of mankind in general, of the church in par-

^c Ver. 12.

^d Ver. 14.

ticular ; and where shall we find a subject of graver import, than the overthrow of the Roman empire, including as it did both church and state.

Now though I agree with the Bishop thus far, the difference between us is wide indeed when we come to apply the wound to the head, as he gives it to the sixth ; but I apply it to the third, considering it to prefigure no less than the subversion of the Roman empire, in the year 475. His hypothesis contains this inconsistency, that the wound is given to the beast, before what he considers as the beast, or the essential part of the beast, viz. the Popedom, has yet arisen ; for he dates the rise of the Popedom at earliest not before the year 606, more than a century after the wound was given ; whereas according to my hypothesis, the wound is given 150 years after the establishment of the beast, and is the very circumstance which clears the way for the Popedom, in the shape of the two horned beast rising out of the earth.

But before we proceed to consider this second beast, it will be convenient to clear up the legitimacy of the four remaining heads ; and answer a question, which may arise respecting the crowns.

When Leo III. being raised to the pontificate in the year 795, found himself oppressed, im-

prisoned, and almost murdered by his enemies; escaping from his prison, he threw himself into the arms of France; whereupon Charlemagne received him with honour, restored him to his chair in 799, and supported him with his power. In the following year Charlemagne attended upon him at Rome, and received from his hands the crown of the western empire. It would seem reasonable from this mutual obligation to conclude, that a good understanding at least, if not a compact, was now formed between his holiness and the new emperor; and this indeed afterwards fully appeared, by the mutual assistance which they ever after afforded each other, and that close union which has ever subsisted between them. For an illustration of this observation, I shall quote Mr. Gibbon; who says, "The mutual obligations of the Popes and the Carlovingian family, form the important link of ancient and modern, of civil and ecclesiastical history^e." Again he says, speaking of the emperor, "but that he might not legally assume the titles of Emperor and Augustus, till he had received the crown from the hands of the Roman pontiff^f." And speaking of the Pope, he says, "But the election was imperfect, nor could the pontiff be legally consecrated,

^e Gibbon, vol. ix. p. 150: 8vo.

^f Page 191.

“till the emperor, the advocate of the church, had graciously signified his approbation and consent.” From hence it appears, that a coronation by the hands of the Roman Bishop, and a close union with him, were become essentials in the establishment of a western emperor, at least at the first election of a new house, and without this ceremony he cannot fairly be considered as a head of the Roman beast. Charlemagne we see had this title; and we cannot hesitate to give him the place of the fourth head. When his dynasty was passed away, Henry I. of Saxony was elected emperor, but he was never crowned; and therefore we must pass on to his son Otho, who succeeded him, and was crowned at Rome by Pope John XII. He then also is a legitimate head, and fills the fifth place. Upon the extinction of this family, Rodolphus of Hopsburg was elected, but refused to go to Rome for coronation, giving this as a reason, “that none of his predecessors had ever returned from thence, without loss either of their rights or their authority.” This reason, by the way, forcibly demonstrates both the custom and the compact. As he was never crowned, we must set him also aside, and pass on to his son Albert, the first Duke of Austria, who suc-

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ceeded him, and who was crowned ; he therefore occupies the sixth place. This high station has been filled by the house of Austria down to the year 1806, when an abdication was forced upon it, and the head of the Germanic empire was content to shelter itself under the roof of its own paternal house. A seventh head arose in the late Corsican adventurer, who would not have been entitled to this distinguished place, notwithstanding his usurpation, had he not purposely procured the presence of the Pope for his coronation, and for entering into a concordat with his holiness. Neither let the shortness of his reign militate against his pretensions, for it appears to be one mark of the seventh head. It is said in chap. xvii. 10. " And " when he cometh, he must continue a *short* " space." How far this account of the seven heads may appear probable to others, I have yet to learn ; but I feel little hesitation in venturing to propose it in the place of that which has been commonly received.

It may now be asked, why we see the crowns upon the heads of the dragon, and not upon those of the beast ; and again, upon the horns of the beast, and not upon the horns of the dragon ? The answer is, that as the heads of the dragon represent the seven kings of Rome, and as the crown was worn by them, it is a proper

and distinguishing mark of their royalty ; but as it was not worn by the emperors, it would not have been a proper mark of distinction on the horns. But we are told, that Dioclesian, the first of the ten emperors, did affect to introduce the Persian diadem. He did so, but, as Gibbon tells us, "it was no more than a broad white fillet set with pearls, which encircled the emperor's head." This can hardly be called a crown ; and as his example was not followed by any of his associates or Pagan successors, it cannot be considered as an imperial distinction. By the Christian emperors indeed the crown was more directly assumed, and therefore it may be said, that the heads of the beast, the emblems of the Christian emperors, ought to have been crowned. I have elsewhere shewn, that the crown is the symbol of priesthood as well as royalty. The kings of Rome were priests as well as kings ; the crown then is a proper symbol of their office. The Christian emperors, though heads of the church, never ministered officially in that church ; the crown then would not have been a proper symbol of their sovereignty : for this reason, the heads of the dragon had them, whilst the heads of the beast had them not ; and the horns of the dragon had them not, whilst the horns of the beast

are to have them, when they themselves shall appear: they are not to us, but to a future generation, and to that generation I shall leave them.

REVELATION. CHAP. XIII.

§. 3. ON THE SECOND BEAST THAT CAME UP OUT OF THE EARTH.

AS I have now considered the principal marks and character of the first beast, I may immediately proceed to speak of the two horned beast, his coadjutor and supporter. For this purpose we must revert to the first beast, who, as I have already stated, received his deadly wound in his third head, at the subversion of the Roman empire. This head was cut off by the Goths, and the empire broken to pieces, but still there was a vitality in the beast, which kept him in existence; the strength of the beast consisted in the union of church and state, and we find the eastern empire making pretensions which she could but feebly support; and the church, at the same time, gaining influence amongst her very enemies, by converting them to Christianity. The first appearance of the wound's convalescence seems to have shewn itself in the year 606, when the Bishop of Rome assumed the title of universal pastor by a grant from the eastern emperor Phocas, and the healing began to take place in the year 755, when Pipin king of France bestowed upon the Ro-

man pontiff the principality of Ravenna: thus temporal power was again becoming united with the church, but as yet there was no imperial head. This was not now long wanting, for the Bishop not being able of his own power to protect either himself or his possessions, threw himself upon Charlemagne the son of Pipin in the year 799, and was by him confirmed in full sovereignty of his popedom; in return for which, Charlemagne in the following year was crowned by the Pope at Rome emperor of the western empire. By this compact between pope and emperor the beast revived, his wound was healed, and we must acknowledge his fourth head. But though the beast was thus revived, and in his full vigour, yet he is under a different appearance: formerly the church and state were united in one person, now they are to be seen united indeed in one interest, but divided under two persons: and therefore a different symbolical representation is required. Accordingly we find the Prophet giving us a new symbol under the form of a two horned beast coming up out of the earth. “^a And I beheld “ another beast coming up out of the earth; and “ he had two horns like a lamb, and he spake as “ a dragon.” The former beast arose out of the

^a Ver. 11.

sea, from amongst the Gentiles. Constantine himself, with whom that power arose, was a Pagan till within a little while of his death; when he was received into the church by baptism. This power arises out of the earth, the church, and is a church-man: he has two horns like a lamb, denoting his powers temporal and spiritual. No prince ever exercised greater temporal power over his subjects than the Pope has done over the whole of Christendom, but all was done under the garb and semblance of religion: his spiritual power was of course religious, and they are therefore well represented by the horns of a lamb; but he spake as a dragon. Here the old leaven again appears, and we must acknowledge him also as sprung from the same parentage as the former beast. He assumes the power of the first beast, and brings all within his pale, by signs and wonders, and lying miracles; he gains the ascendancy, and, by creating a new imperial head, erects ^b that

^b In the eighth century of the Christian era, a religious quarrel, the worship of images, provoked the Romans to assert their independence: their Bishop became the temporal as well as the spiritual father of a free people, and of the western empire, which was restored by Charlemagne. The title and *image* still decorate the singular constitution of modern Germany. Gibbon, vol. xii. p. 257.

And Europe dates a new era from this restoration of the western empire. Gibbon, vol. ix. p. 180.

image of the former beast, to which all must now bow and obey; all who would save their souls alive must be within the pale of the Roman catholic church, and in contradistinction to the Greek or eastern church, which was at this time anathematized; all must be members of the *Latin* church, all must receive the mark of the *Latin* beast, the number of his name, 666°.

I cannot close my account of this beast without taking some notice of a very ingenious hypothesis of Dean Woodhouse, that the two horns of this beast represent; the one the Papal; the other the Mahometan power; but I would, with all due deference to his opinion, humbly submit it to his judgment, whether this beast, (confessedly the papal beast, both by his own

c In the Greek, in which language he it remembered the Apocalypse was written, *lateinos*, (*lateinos*,)

| | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|-------|
| λ | - | - | - | - | 30 |
| α | - | - | - | - | 1 |
| τ | - | - | - | - | 300 |
| ι | - | - | - | - | 5 |
| ι | - | - | - | - | 10 |
| ν | - | - | - | - | 50 |
| ο | - | - | - | - | 70 |
| ς | - | - | - | - | 200 |
| | | | | | <hr/> |
| | | | | | 666 |
| | | | | | <hr/> |

See Newton, vol. ii. p. 298.

interpretation and mine,) whether this papal beast, can be said to exert the Mahometan power; which he must do, if one of his horns or powers be Mahometan. I am aware that the Dean considers the whole beast to be Mahometan, as well as Papal; to support which he has drawn a parallel between the one and the other: to this parallel I give my most hearty assent, so far as the disposition of their temper and the genius of their religion is concerned. But this beast is active, and there are two transactions with which Mahomet could have nothing to do: the first is that of raising an image to the former beast; consult the parallel on this place, Woodhouse, p. 372. "The Popes have erected a civil empire of vast extent in Christendom. It is the very image of the *ancient* Roman tyranny, which persecuted the *infant* church." "Mahomet and his successors have erected a civil empire of great extent, like the Roman; a cruel oppressive power, persecuting true religion." So that these two empires, raised by their respective chiefs, are in likeness of extent and tyranny to *ancient* Rome; the persecutor of the *infant* church; but let it be observed, that the image which this beast raises, is an image to the first beast, who does not represent *ancient* Rome, the persecutor of

the infant church, but is a Christian beast absorbing the imperial power of Rome, and the ecclesiastical power of the Christian church; and the worship of this Christian beast the second beast enforces; with this Mahomet could have no concern. The second transaction is that of causing all to receive a mark. With the common interpretation of Irenæus and Newton the Dean is dissatisfied. Unquestionably, he must be so; it is a strong and effectual bar against his hypothesis. But let me ask this question, and with humility I desire to ask it, Would the Dean have been dissatisfied had it been *for*, instead of against him? It certainly does fix this beast to be the Latin beast, without any connexion with the Arabian prophet.

Nevertheless, I am so far of the Dean's opinion, as to think that a connexion between the Papal and Mahometan powers will hereafter arise; I have surmised as much at the end of my exposition of Daniel; but the time is not yet come, I dare not therefore enter into the subject: I only object to its being now fixed on this beast, which appears to me purely Latin. If I might be permitted to hazard a conjecture, this connexion will take place at that time, when we shall see the Roman Latin beast in the wilderness, within the precincts of Mussul-

man faith ; that house of bondage, which still holds the eastern church in durance : when we shall see the Roman beast in the wilderness, bearing on his back Infidelity triumphant.

CONCLUSION.

AS I am now come to that point of the Apocalypse which I proposed to myself for a close to my investigation, I shall draw my observations to a conclusion, by endeavouring to place in one view a clear and comprehensive account of the whole matter.

The Apostle tells us, that Christianity arising in a pure state should become corrupted; should sink into a deeper state of corruption, and yet a still deeper: this is prefigured by the *four* first seals or horses. He tells us, that the church should fall under great tribulations and tyranny; this is portrayed by the first four trumpets, each trumpet answering to its correspondent seal. The nature of these tribulations is likewise marked out by the three woe trumpets, each corresponding with the three *corrupted* states of Christianity: he tells us the consequences of these woes; viz. the great access of nominally professing Christians, the humiliation and depression of the true; and he gives us a full picture of the tyranny in the shape of a beast, who was to have dominion over the saints, to be wounded almost to death, to be revived and restored to power by the influence

of a second beast and an image; and the whole tyranny, comprehending the two first woes in power, to continue for a period of 1260 years; at the end of this period the third woe is immediately to take its beginning, and to produce a third appearance of the beast.

Let us now turn to history; this will inform us, that Christianity did arise in a state of purity, did continue so comparatively till about the year 175, when corruptions began to flow in from the Greek and Latin philosophers, till at length a corrupted church rose in triumph to a head; during this period Christians suffered much persecution, but no spiritual woe, no spiritual woe in *power* had yet subdued their consciences. From the year 325 the case was altered, and human learning, backed by power, took precedence of the Gospel. This state of things continued till the overthrow of the Roman empire about the year 475. By this event the Roman power seemed almost annihilated; but it survived and revived in the Roman pontiff and western emperor, and lasted, in the deeply corrupted church, till the Reformation, making a period of 1260 years. From the fall of the Roman empire, history goes on to tell us, men were kept in a state of barbarism and degradation by the Goths and Vandals for 391 years; and then sinking in ignorance and superstition

under the power of the Roman Bishop and Emperor of the West, sustained the miseries of what St. John calls the second woe. It not only informs us also of the deep humiliation of true Christianity, but it gives us an ample account of its vigorous struggles, and its glorious success at the Reformation: thus do history and prophecy walk hand in hand together.

In the foregoing observations, I have endeavoured to fit these parts of prophecy together, and to prove their close connection and consequences. If I have done it clearly, it is well; if I have not, I flatter myself that I have produced so much truth, as may prevail upon some abler man to do that in which I have failed. But I would warn all future commentators to weigh well what I have advanced, before they attempt to build new hypotheses upon the old foundations: indeed I could wish to warn all commentators to beware how they apply passing events or future; for it is not designed that we should look into futurity, nor can we without presumption. It is true, I have done it in one instance, but this was forced upon me.

That I may be perfectly understood, I will again state what it is I mean by an apocalyptic beast. It is, I conceive, a fierce, bigotted, overbearing and persecuting tyranny, supported by corruption of the true religion, ignorance and

superstition ; - and compounded of imperial and pontifical power, either united in one person, or closely connected in more than one, so as to act in unison. The first we find in Constantine and his successors: the second is established in Pope Leo III. and Charlemagne; which tyranny subsisted with little interruption, from its first foundation under Constantine to its overthrow at the Reformation: in the first, the imperial power was predominant; in the second, the pontifical; and in them together the beast lived, and prospered, and practised. The first beast was introduced and supported under his first three heads by the corruption of Christianity through philosophy, falsely so called, through a period which was commensurate with the first woe; and under his subsequent heads, he was sustained in power for his appointed time by the second beast, who was introduced by barbarism, and supported by ignorance and superstition; and here commenced the second woe. He received a severe wound under his third head, almost to death, but he still survived; the deadly wound was healed, and he produced a fourth head, and continued the power till the Reformation. We are told that when his second woe ends, the third woe cometh quickly: I have shewn that the second woe ended at the Reformation, and I conceive

that the third immediately commenced by that inundation of scepticism, lukewarmness, schism, and infidelity, which then broke in upon us, and which has been ever since increasing to such an alarming height. The seventh trumpet at that time sounded, and hailed the glories of the Reformation and the true church, but at the same time gave us a sight of the third terrific beast of infidelity. Upon this part of my subject I dare not enter, because time has not yet sufficiently removed the veil of mystery : but I shall content myself with a few remarks only.

When I speak of three beasts, I do not mean three absolutely distinct and different beasts, but the same beast under different appearances. The first is imperial and ecclesiastical tyranny, the imperial power being predominant ; the second is the same tyranny, when ecclesiastical power takes the lead ; and the third bears infidelity in triumph^d. This third has every mark of the first beast, and is certainly in part the same, though he has some marks peculiar to himself, and is therefore different : he has the seven heads and ten horns, which are distinguishing marks of the first beast ; and St. John tells us, he is the beast that was, and is not, and yet is : there is in this respect some difference.

^d See ch. xvii. v. 8. and 11.

The woman seated upon the scarlet coloured beast in the wilderness I take to be infidelity, who was kept in obscurity, not suffered to obtrude herself but under the cloke of religion, the garb of the church; but under the seventh trumpet, this fiend began to shew herself more openly to the world. We know that infidelity has not been in fashion till of late years, but we have seen in our days this brazen harlot openly rearing her shameless front in all the abominations and filthiness of her fornications^c.

Another observation, which I must repeat before I conclude, is upon the change of scene which so often takes place throughout the Apocalypse, and which in my opinion strongly corroborates the plan that I have adopted: this is

• May I now venture upon one hint? I do it by way of *conjecture* only; I do it for the sake of repressing the ardour of commentators in applying this woman on the beast to passing events, rather than to gratify my own impertinence of interpretation. We see the scarlet whore seated upon the back of the Roman beast in the wilderness; the beast is not triumphant, but is subservient to the woman, at least their power is united, and the woman seems predominant: power is given them as I think but for one hour, and in the *wilderness*, the place into which the eastern church is retired. As infidelity then made its open and avowed appearance at the Reformation of the western church, may we not think it probable, that its hour of triumph in power will be at the time of the liberation of the eastern? I give this as merely an idea passing in my mind; some future generation will decide upon its truth or fallacy.

never done without some sort of notice of a change being about to take place: for instance, there is great and magnificent preparation in heaven for the opening of the seals; no one is able to do it but the Lamb, and the solemnities preceding the transaction are very striking. Before the opening of the seventh another solemnity takes place, that of sealing the servants of God in their foreheads; and when it was opened, there was silence in heaven about the space of half an hour. At the ending of the fourth trumpet, when the scene is about to revert again, the woe angel is heard: next comes the little book to introduce the Gentiles and the two witnesses: then a wonder is announced in heaven, and we have described the woman in the wilderness and the great red dragon: the Prophet is next placed upon the sea shore, where he first sees a beast arising from the sea, and afterwards another coming out of the earth: he is then carried to the wilderness, where he is shewn the third beast which is to come. All which signs and changes shew, in my apprehension, not a regular continuance of the history, but a reverting to a former point; in the former case they would be superfluous, in the latter they are necessary. The confusion resulting from the attempt to interpret these prophecies in an unbroken chain is altogether inexplicable;

by considering them in this other method most of the difficulties may be cleared away.

I shall here bring my observations to a close, as I wish not to be prolix, and am conscious, that if I have not placed that truth in a clear light, which I have diligently sought, and which appears to me so conspicuous, I have nothing else to arrest the attention of the reader, and no claims to urge for a further waste of his time : but I must again express my surprise, that commentators, who have spared no labour, who were so well qualified by ingenuity and learning to investigate these prophecies, should so totally overlook or neglect the two most remarkable epochas in the history of the Christian church ; I mean, the conversion of the Roman empire to Christianity under Constantine, and the Reformation begun by Luther. But the truth is, Constantine has been hailed by all parties as the grand benefactor of the church ; and the character of the beast has been lost in the splendor of the imperial Christian. The learned Protestant also has had his eyes blinded and his judgment clouded by too great an earnestness to affix the character of the beast upon the Roman pontiff ; whilst commentators of our days are no less eager to explain the apocalyptic prophecies by events now passing before our eyes. But we must give to each prophecy its

proper period, and proper object of fulfilment, and not put a force upon any to support a favourite hypothesis. There is a sufficiency applicable to the Bishop of Rome; and, if I mistake not, a sufficiency also for our present times, and for the future also.

APPENDIX.



APPENDIX.

No. I.

ON THE TWENTY-FOURTH CHAPTER OF ST. MATTHEW.

BEFORE I entirely dismiss my subject, I must trespass a little further upon my reader's attention to consequences arising from certain positions, which I think I have established in the preceding pages; as they will afford a key to unlock some passages in Scripture which have not, as I apprehend, been rightly understood. One in particular has been differently interpreted by different learned men: I mean that in the twenty-fourth chapter of St. Matthew, of our Saviour's prophecy concerning the destruction of the Jewish temple. Some have conceived the whole prophecy to relate to that event; others have understood a quick transition from the destruction of the temple to our Lord's coming to judgment. I cannot assent to either of these statements. It is not however my intention to go through this prophecy step by step, and apply every part of it, as this has already been done in a masterly manner by that great and truly learned divine, Bishop Horsley^a; but he has not touched upon the particular passage which I have immediately in view.

From ver. 4. to ver. 28. the difficulty is to be found,

^a Sermons 1, 2, 3. vol. i.

and, if I mistake not, the solution also. It appears to me, that our Lord is describing the militant state of his church till his second advent, in general ; but in ver. 15. he becomes very particular indeed ; for he makes use of an expression of the prophet Daniel, and refers us to that prophet for his meaning, and also he has put a strong mark of notation on the place, " Whoso read-
"eth, let him understand : " so that we must of necessity turn to the prophet to read him, that we may understand our Lord. I am almost afraid to express my apprehensions, that learned commentators have taken their sense of Daniel's prophecy from our Lord's, rather than extracted the meaning of our Saviour from the Prophet, still keeping in view the application of the whole to the Romans : but we must understand the whole scope of the Prophet's meaning before we can apply our Lord's.

The abomination of desolation is the expression : and here I cannot but suspect, that commentators have stumbled at the very threshold. It is said, that the Roman eagles and ensigns and images were an abomination to the Jews : to be sure they were ; but if it be urged, that these expressions imply something visible, some standard, ensign, or sign of idolatrous worship, introduced and planted upon the holy ground, though I do not hesitate to assent in their application to the Romans, yet this visible sign no less sets before my eyes the crescent of Mahomet rising over the fallen and desolate church of God, than the Roman eagles advancing to the destruction of the Jewish temple : and be it also observed, that this prophecy is addressed to the disciples in private, and not to the Jews at large, and therefore it should seem, that it concerns the Gospel more than the Law of Moses, the church of God more than the Jewish polity.

I do not deny the connection of this prophecy with the destruction accomplished by the Romans, but I contend, that it more fully relates to the Mahometans: the Romans certainly began the work of desolation, but the Mahometans completed it: the Romans destroyed the Jewish city and temple, and dispersed the people into all countries; but the Mussulman faith has supplanted the Christian, and the mosque of Mahomet rears its head in the place of the temple of God.

It is no new thing, that a prophecy should be so contrived as to fix the attention of those to whom it is addressed upon some event which has taken or is about to take place perhaps in their days, but to have respect to a far distant and remote event, which is more fully and completely to accomplish it in the latter days. For an illustration of this, let the reader turn to the book of Psalms, where he will find many things spoken in the person of David, as applicable to himself, but more directly to be fulfilled in his greater Son the blessed Messiah: but more to our purpose are the frequent promises in Isaiah of the restoration of the Jews after the Babylonian captivity, in reference to that greater deliverance after a much longer and more terrible desolation brought upon them for the rejection of their prince. Isaiah indeed affords, I am persuaded, a complete illustration of this remark throughout, but as it is foreign to my purpose at this time to enter into any comments upon him, I shall now revert to our Saviour's advice, and turn to the book of the prophet Daniel.

The abomination of desolation is twice spoken of by Daniel. In the eleventh chapter, verse 31. "And they shall place the abomination that maketh desolate." In the twelfth chapter, verse 11. "And the abomination

"that maketh desolate set up." The first abomination, according to Bishop Newton's interpretation, which I allow, belongs to the Romans; the second, according to mine, which I have given in the first part of this work, must be applied to the Mahometans^b: to the first desolation Daniel has fixed no period, to the second he has given a period of 1290 years: apply this period to the Roman desolation, and it must have long since past, it must have come to an end in the year 1360. But this is by no means the fact. These desolations then cannot be the same; the prophet must have spoken of two. The question then is, to which of the two does our Saviour refer? We are told, that the Roman standard bearing the idolatrous images of heathenism was an abomination to the Jews; but I conceive the crescent of Mahomet, the ensign of Islamism, was no less an abomination to the disciples of Christ; and though the destruction of the temple, the visible church of the Jews, was the consequence of the success of the one, the Mahometan mosque rising on the ruins of the Christian church was the consequence of the setting up of the other. Thus far they seem to have a pretty equal claim upon the prediction of our Saviour. But here another question arises, a question of the utmost importance, which in my apprehension attaches to almost all the prophecies, from the fall of Adam to the second advent of our Lord; Does our Saviour mean to foretell the fate of the Jewish

^b "Sophronius bowed before his new master, and secretly muttered, in the words of Daniel, The abomination of desolation is in the holy place." Gibbon, vol. ix. p. 43. 8vo. "This prediction, which had already served for Antiochus and the Romans, was again refitted for the present occasion, by the economy of Sophronius, one of the deepest theologians of the Monothelite controversy." Gibbon, note upon the place.

dispensation only? or does he not include the whole of God's church to the end? If this latter be the case, which, from what I have already said, seems to be the case, the interpretation of the abomination of desolation by the Roman eagles and ensigns only is a mean and partial interpretation, and leads to much confusion. Our Saviour was aware of the mistake which would arise, and pointedly refers us to Daniel for his meaning: from understanding Daniel then we may understand our divine Lord, and perceive that he refers to both desolations; to the one as a type of the other.

Our Saviour therefore meant to include the Arabian apostacy by the abomination of desolation: and now his prophecy is clear, and fitted in all its parts from the beginning to the end. He begins with the destruction of the visible Jewish temple, he foretells the distresses and transgressions of the Church, and its wonderful increase, and then introduces its grand apostacy, and its state under that apostacy; he then goes on to say, in the 29th verse, "And^c *immediately after* the tribulation " of those days," (or after this apostacy is come to an end,) "the sun shall be darkened, and the moon shall " not give her light, and then shall appear the sign of

^c Bishop Horsley seems to think, that it is more agreeable to the general cast of the prophetic language to understand those days of the whole period of the tribulation of the Jewish nation, that whole period during which Jerusalem is to be trodden down; and that this whole period will *probably* be a period of affliction, not to the Jews only, but also in some degree to the Christian Church; and he has taken some pains to shew this probability: but had he understood the abomination of desolation in the sense which I have now given it, he would have concluded that those days of tribulation *must* not only intend the period of Jewish affliction, but also *must* comprehend the great apostacy of Christ's Church, and that the word *immediately* particularly referred to such a period of tribulation. Serm. vol. i. p. 48.

“the Son of man in heaven: and then shall all the tribes of the earth mourn, and they shall see the Son of man coming in the clouds of heaven with power and great glory.” All this is perfectly consonant with Daniel’s *end* and St. John’s second advent of our Lord. The abomination of desolation, taken in this sense, for which we have Daniel for a voucher, produced by our Lord himself, can never be applied to the Romans exclusively; for Daniel has fixed a period for one desolation, which if beginning with the destruction of the temple has passed by long since; but there has been yet no cleansing of the sanctuary.

There is one passage more in this chapter which must not be passed over in silence, because Bishop Horsley, though he has touched upon it, has not in my apprehension sufficiently explained it, and Bishop Porteus has produced it as decisive on his side of the question; that everything which our Lord had been saying in the preceding part of the chapter related principally to the destruction of Jerusalem by the Romans.

In arguing this point, the latter learned Prelate, after stating that the destruction of Jerusalem is the primary object of this prophecy, admits that the forms of expression, and the images made use of, are for the most part applicable to the day of judgment; and that an allusion to that great event, as a kind of secondary object, runs through almost every part of the prophecy: this, says he, is a very common practice in the prophetic writings, where two subjects are carried on together, a principal and subordinate one. He goes on to say, In Isaiah there are no less than three subjects, the restoration of the Jews from the Babylonish captivity, the call of the Gentiles to the Christian covenant, and the redemption of

mankind by the Messiah, which are frequently adumbrated under the same figures and images, and are so blended and interwoven together, that it is extremely difficult to separate them from each other. And he also says, "In the same manner our Saviour in the chapter before us seems to hold out the destruction of Jerusalem, which is his principal subject, as a type of the dissolution of the world, which is the underpart of the representation." Perhaps I do not understand the meaning of the learned Bishop's terms, *principal*, *subordinate*, *underpart*; he surely does not mean to imply an *inferiority* either in the secondary object of Isaiah's prophecy, or of our Lord's? The redemption of mankind must be a matter of greater weight, than the deliverance of the Jews from the Babylonian captivity; the dissolution of the world of much deeper interest, than the destruction of Jerusalem; and in all cases, I presume, is the thing typified greater than its type, and therefore can never be said with propriety to represent an *underpart*. That the primary prophecies of Isaiah were more conspicuously prominent to the comprehension of the cotemporary Jews, I grant; but they opened to greater, and still greater things hereafter: and this is precisely the case with our Lord's; he begins his prophecy with the destruction of Jerusalem, expands it to the desolation of the church, and ends it with the dissolution of the world: so far then as Isaiah's prophecies illustrate our Lord's, I think the illustration is against the position of the Bishop.

After this illustration, the learned Bishop produces the text which is to confirm his point; the very text which I wish to consider; "Verily I say unto you, this generation shall not pass till all these things be ful-

“filled^d.” “And this,” says the learned Prelate, “by the way is an unanswerable proof, that every thing our Lord had been saying in the preceding part of the chapter related principally, not to the day of judgment, or to any other remote event, but to the destruction of Jerusalem, which did in reality happen, before that generation passed away.” Now if I might presume to give a sense to this 34th verse different from the accepted translation, (which I should not dare to do, did I not feel convinced that the verb made use of would fully bear me out,) I should construe it thus, “Verily I say unto you, this generation shall not pass till all these things *begin to be fulfilled*.” The verb made use of by the Evangelist is *γίνομαι*, neither *πληρόω* nor *τελέω*, the two latter of which only mean complete and final accomplishment; the former is a verb of various signification; it would be too much to minute down every place where it is used in its different senses even in the new testimony. I shall content myself with only one, which I think is directly to my purpose: John viii. 58. “Before Abraham was,” or before Abraham *began to be*, “I am.” I conclude then, that the meaning of this passage is, that this generation shall not pass away before the fulfilment of this line of prophecy shall begin to take place: which it certainly did in the destruction of Jerusalem.

This interpretation will also clear up another part of Scripture, even in Daniel himself, who says, in the 26th verse of his second chapter, “And the people of the prince that shall come shall destroy the city and the sanctuary.” This I will allow to be applicable to the de-

^d Matt. xxiv. 34.

struction of Jerusalem and the temple by the Romans: he goes on to say, "And the end thereof *shall be* with a *flood*, and unto the end of the war desolations are determined." This is something posterior to the destruction of the temple, something more; a flood is introduced, and desolations; desolations determined, or fixed for a period, we already understand, and for the flood, we cannot but refer to the flood cast out of the dragon's mouth: and in the middle of the next verse, he says, "And for (or on account of) the overspreading of abominations he shall make it desolate, even until the consummation, and that determined shall be poured upon the desolate." The intelligent reader can here interpret for himself; after what has been said, this needs no comment from me: so beautifully does one part of Scripture, rightly understood, clear up and explain another.

One observation more: it would seem extraordinary that Daniel, St. John, and our blessed Saviour should say so much about the future state of the Church, and should take so little notice of that grand apostacy which afflicted it so much in its eastern branch. Very few commentators indeed have allowed that Daniel touches upon it at all, although he was evidently prophesying in the east: of St. John it has been allowed, though prophesying in the west; and it has been forced in upon him, as it were of necessity, but surely in the wrong place: and of our Saviour it has been entirely denied. I trust that I have now shewn that the Arabian apostacy was the chief subject of Daniel, that it was by no means an inconsiderable subject of St. John, and that it was very far from being overlooked by our blessed Lord. Thus we find Daniel predicting the

eastern apostacy and introducing the western; St. John prophesying of the western and recurring to the eastern; our Lord in general terms speaking of the abomination of desolation, for the solution of which he refers us to Daniel; and St. Paul in more general terms, and in plainer language, foretelling a great falling away from the principles of true Christianity, combining them all together in one grand whole.

Let me recommend one reflection, before I conclude: St. Paul tells us, that "that day shall not come, except there come a falling away first:" that falling away is already come; it still practises and prospers in the east; the seventh trumpet still sounds in the west; the woe of infidelity, carelessness and indifference, under the specious veil of liberality waxes great amongst us; yet our Lord is coming, is even at the door. "Shall I find faith on the earth when I come?" is a question, which cannot be seriously reflected upon without fear and trembling. Surely ten righteous men will be found in the city, surely seven thousand in Israel, who have not bowed the knees unto Baal!

No. II.

ON THE FALLING AWAY IN THE LATTER DAYS, AND IN
THE LAST DAYS.

AS I have already touched upon St. Paul's prophecy of the falling away in the church, and the Man of sin, I think it expedient here to say something more upon the subject.

It is remarkable that the eagerness which most Protestant commentators have displayed to expose the corruptions of the Church of Rome, has led them to apply every prophecy concerning apostacy solely to that church, forgetting or overlooking the great defection of her sister in the east; accordingly this prophecy of St. Paul has been by Protestants exclusively given to the western Church, whilst the Romanists indeed have urged it upon the eastern: but I am convinced that it includes both. Can it be supposed that Christ and his apostles should have respect unto one part of the Church more than the other? or that St. Paul, writing to the Thessalonians, who would afterwards form a part of the eastern Church, should notice only an apostacy which should arise in the western Church, unless indeed the eastern were to continue in purity to the end? As this will hardly be contended for, I must conclude, that this prophecy was general: but if I am not mistaken, it bears internal marks of reference to both; these marks I will endeavour to elucidate. "Let no man deceive you by any means," says the apostle: "*for that day shall not come,*" (meaning I presume the second Advent of our Lord,) "*except there come a falling away first.*" It is idle to quibble about the strict meaning of the phrase, a falling away; it is a

* 2 Thess. ii. 3.

departure from the truth, whether resting in corruption only, or sinking into absolute apostacy. The word is as general as can possibly be: "and that man of sin be revealed, the son of perdition." This also is a general description of the leader or leaders of the falling away, whoever they may be; "who opposeth and exalteth himself above all that is called God, or that is worshipped; so that he as God sitteth in the temple of God, shewing himself that he is God." This is equally descriptive of both the little horns; that of the beast, "shall speak great words against the Most High;" that of the he-goat, "magnified himself even to the Prince of the host, and he shall stand up also against the Prince of princes:" "And now ye know what withholdeth, that he might be revealed in his time." It is no matter what it was which withheld the revelation, as Popery and Mahometanism rose together, and both in consequence of that mystery of iniquity which was beginning to work even in the apostles' time: "And then shall that wicked be revealed whom the Lord shall consume with the spirit of his mouth, and shall destroy with the brightness of his coming; *even him* whose coming is after the working of satan, with all power and signs and lying wonders." That they both came after the working of satan with all power, is I presume easily conceded; but it is said, that signs and lying wonders do not belong to Mahomet, for he pretended to no miracles: but if Mahomet himself did not, his followers certainly did; and Mahomet, we may remember, held out the Koran as a standing miracle; but miracles in their strict sense apart, what was his retirement to his cave, his nocturnal intercourse with the angel Gabriel, his divine dove, and his ecstatic vision in the heavens, but mummery that sa-

voured strongly of signs and lying wonders? at least equal to the signs and lying wonders of the Church of Rome. Thus far then is the falling away equally applicable to the two little horns, the corruption of the Church of Rome and the imposture of Mahomet. But there are yet two marks, which must not be overlooked, and which in my opinion particularly point to the Arabian impostor: "Then shall that wicked be revealed, whom the Lord shall consume with the spirit of his mouth, and shall destroy with the brightness of his coming." I have already pointed out the difference of the destruction which awaits the little horn of the beast, and the little horn of the goat; the former is to have dominion over the saints for 1260 years, when the saints are to take away his dominion, and consume him unto the end: the latter is to be broken without hand; or in other words, the little horn of the beast is to be in a state of gradual consumption, when that of the goat is to be swept off at once. The first is to be consumed by the saints, the second by the Lord himself at his second advent. This verse then seems more particularly to point to the eastern imposture, which still awaits the coming of our Lord; whilst the western domination is now, and has been for three centuries past, in a state of decay. The second mark is, "Therefore brethren stand fast, and hold the traditions which ye have been taught:" a piece of advice which I conceive would have been needlessly given to a part of the eastern Church, if that Church had not stood in danger of the mischief which the apostle had been foretelling. Whilst then the chief parts of this prophecy will equally include the eastern with the western Church, and this latter part seems to point directly to the eastern, we

might be authorized to apply the whole exclusively to the eastern. But St. Paul alluding again to this anti-christian falling away, in his first Epistle to Timothy, 1 Tim. iv. 1. says, "That in the latter times some shall depart from the faith, giving heed to seducing spirits and doctrines of devils; speaking lies in hypocrisy, having their conscience seared with a hot iron; forbidding to marry, and commanding to abstain from meats." This is so strong a mark of the western superstition, that it cannot be mistaken; we must conclude therefore, that the falling away foretold by St. Paul is the whole apostacy and corruption which took place in both parts of the Christian Church.

I cannot dismiss this subject without a few more remarks. Some commentators have taken great pains to shew, that the latter days and the last days do not mean the same period of time, whilst others have confounded them together. It appears to me, that the common sense of language will preclude any necessity for the display of much learning upon the subject: the latter and the last can never mean the same thing, and the giving to them the same sense is making a confusion where the apostle meant to be explicitly clear: "In the latter times," says this great Apostle, "some shall depart from the faith, giving heed to seducing spirits, and doctrines of devils, speaking lies in hypocrisy, having their conscience seared with a hot iron; forbidding to marry, and commanding to abstain from meats." This, as I before observed, is a peculiar mark of the Romish church, and the latter times must then mean the period when the dominion over the saints was exercised by her: the middle ages, that dark reign of gloomy superstition and ignorance. In the common acceptation of language, the

last days must mean a period subsequent to the latter; accordingly the apostle says in his second Epistle to Timothy^f, "This know *also*, that in the *last* days perilous times shall come; for men shall be lovers of their own selves, covetous, boasters, proud, blasphemers, disobedient to parents, unthankful, unholy, without natural affection, truce-breakers, false accusers, incontinent, fierce, despisers of those that are good, traitors, heady, highminded, lovers of pleasures more than lovers of God, having a form of godliness, but denying the power thereof; for of this sort are they, which creep into houses, and lead captive silly women laden with sins, led away with divers lusts, ever learning, and never able to come to the knowledge of the truth. Now as Jannes and Jambres withstood Moses, so do these also resist the truth: men of corrupt minds, reprobate concerning the faith." This statement is also supported by St. Peter, who says, in his second Epistle, "that there shall come in the *last* days scoffers, walking after their own lusts:" and also by Jude, who says, "but, beloved, remember the words which were spoken before of the apostles of our Lord Jesus Christ; how that they told you, there should be mockers in the *last* time, who should walk after their own ungodly lusts: these be they who *separate* themselves, sensual, having not the Spirit^h."

The latter timesⁱ and the last days of St. Paul have

^f 2 Tim. iii. 1.

^g Jude ver. 17.

^h 2 Pet. iii. 3.

ⁱ I am aware that Moses, and even St. Paul, have used the words latter days and last days as applicable to the whole Gospel dispensation, but then they were speaking in general terms, with a reference merely to the two dispensations; and St. John also uses the phrase of the last time as applicable to the times then present, because Antichrist was to make his ap-

then given us a description of two sorts of persons: the former I conceive no Protestant will hesitate to ascribe to the Church of Rome; the latter, I am afraid, we can have as little hesitation in ascribing to our own times. Let any sober Christian well consider the state of our own country, where Christ is worshipped in the greatest purity, where morality is better understood, and practice more attended to than in any other Christian country, and let him say whether he cannot perceive, in this dreadful catalogue of St. Paul, characters which are continually before our eyes; and if it is so in the green tree, how is it in the dry, how is it on the continent of Europe, how is it in every other state of Christendom? But let not the good Christian despond; it is true, "that evil men "and seducers shall wax worse and worse, deceiving "and being deceived;" but the apostle tells us, "they "shall proceed no further^k," that is, they shall not come to a domineering head for any length of time; for if we may dare to interpret a future prediction, the beast in his third appearance will reign but one hour.

pearance in the last time, and the mystery of iniquity was then already at work. St. Paul however, in the passage under consideration, (2 Thess. ii. 7.) is more particular, and is describing the different times and characters of Antichrist; he begins by telling us, that a falling away should come; and that in the latter days a description of persons should forbid to marry, and command to abstain from meats; and also in the last days another description of persons should arise, who would make the times perilous; the latter days and the last days of St. Paul will then exactly accord with the two last woes, and are remarkably descriptive of the middle age and the present.

^k 2 Tim. iii. 9.

No. III.

A CHRONOLOGICAL TABLE OF THE PRINCIPAL EVENTS

REFERRED TO.

B. C.

- 747. Babylonian monarchy founded.
- 335. Alexander appointed General of the Greeks.
- 166. Conquest of Macedonia by the Romans.
- 133. Conquest of Pergamos.
- 33. Cleopatra defeated.
- 27. Octavius Cæsar confirmed Emperor Augustus.

A. D.

- 175. Growth of philosophical corruption in religion.
- 248. Dioclesian Emperor.
- 262. Accession of Galerius.
- 292. Constantius invested with the purple, and Constantine set out to join the army.
- 306. Constantine saluted Emperor.
- 325. Corruptions in the doctrine of the Church supported and enforced by power. Council of Nice.
- 335. Constantine enforced the restoration of Arius.
- 363. Death of Julian, and end of the dynasty of Constantine.
- 364. Valentinian Emperor.
- 392. Theodosius Emperor.
- 408. First siege of Rome by Alaric.
- 475. Complete subversion of the Roman empire.
- 630. Establishment of Mahomet.
- 799. Establishment of the Pope.

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